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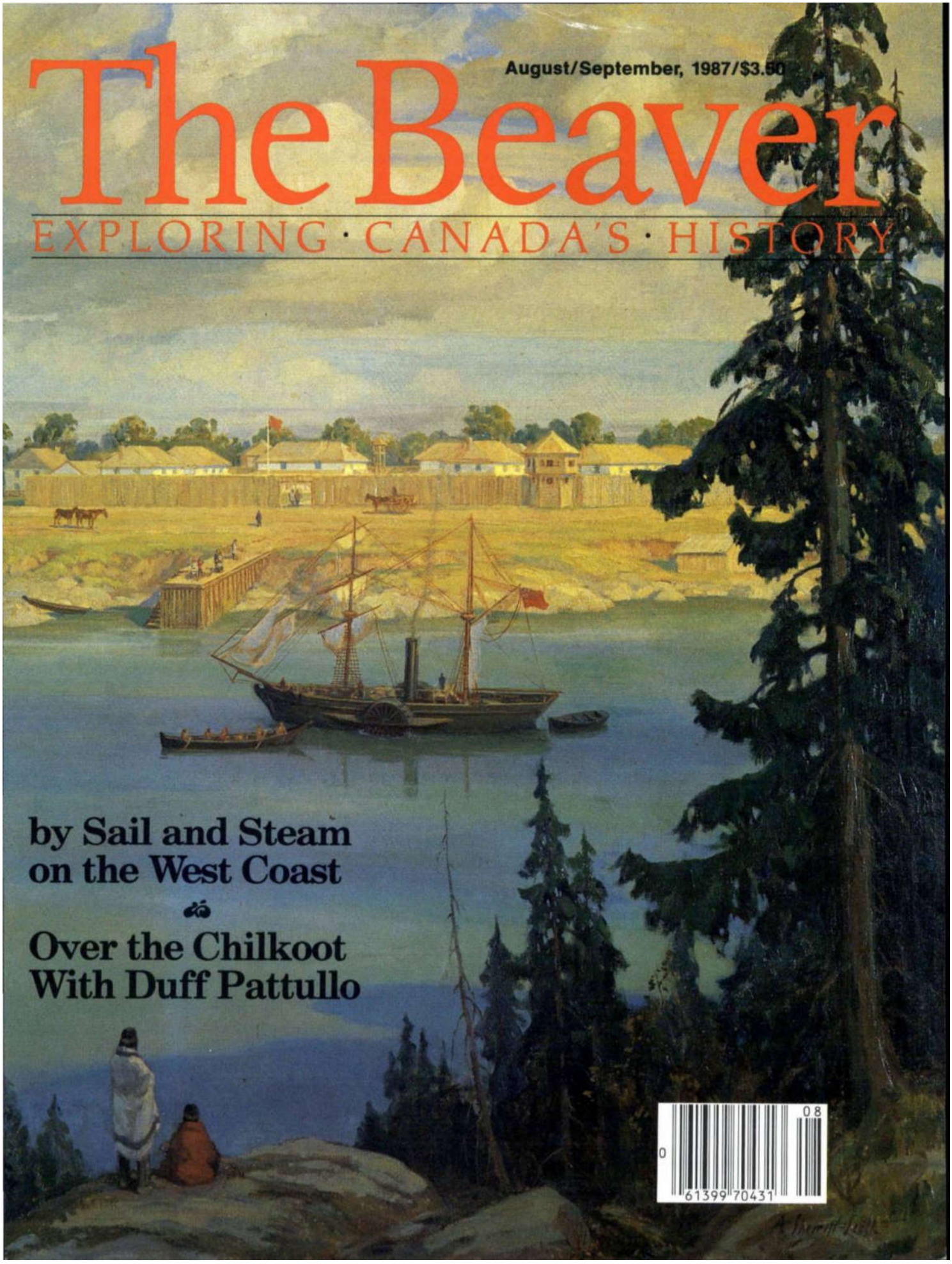

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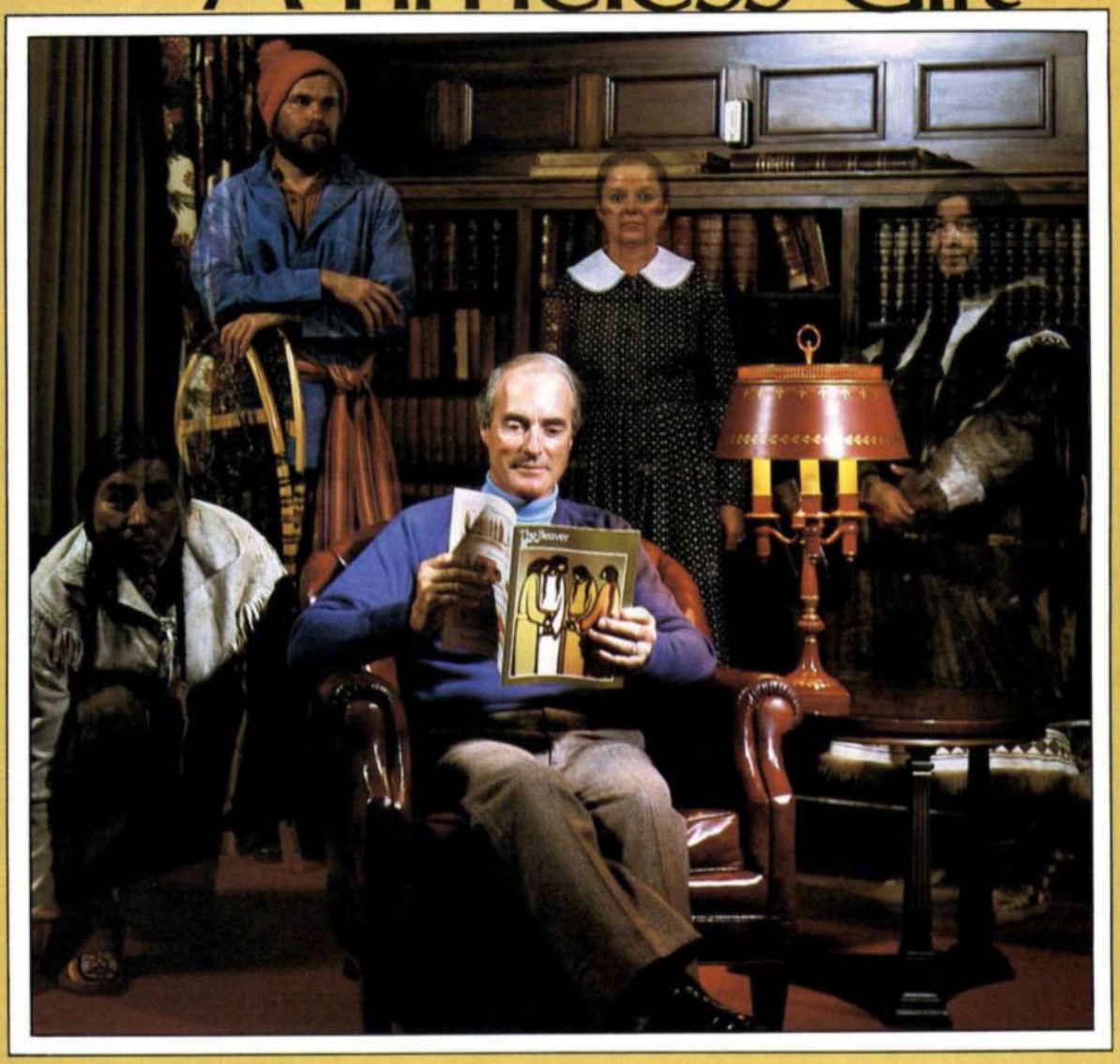

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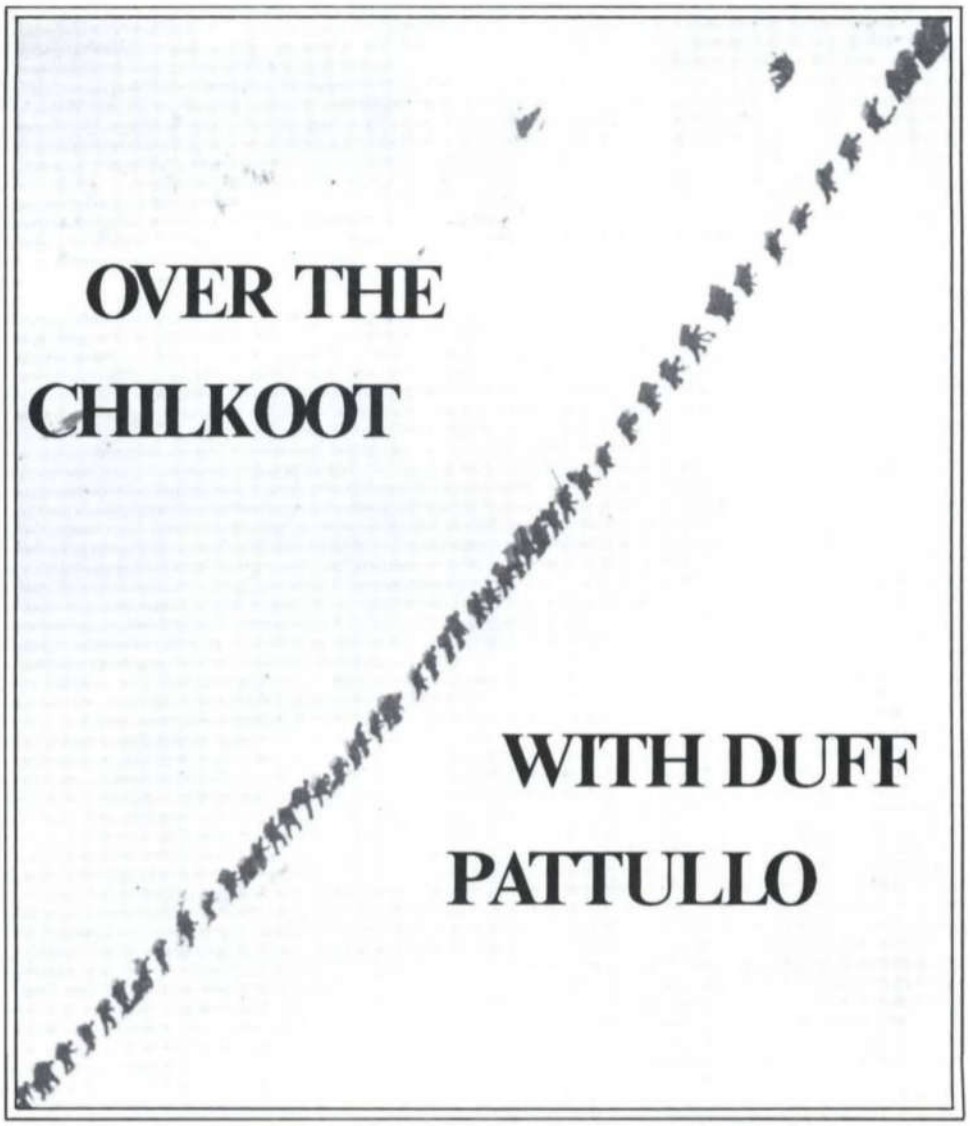
OVER THE CHILKOOT WITH DUFF PATTULLO



Perhaps the most striking, and certainly the most frequently used image of the Klondike gold rush is a photograph of a single strand of men, each with his world upon his back, trudging up the golden stairs: that final, thirty-degree slope that took them to the top of the Chilkoot Pass. Black against the white snow, they appear as shadows, anonymous and insubstantial, yet caught for an instant and forever by the photographer's lens. Each one was an individual with a story to tell, but many of them left no other record of the fact that they had made the terrible climb. One among the thousands of men who crossed the Chilkoot in the winter of 1897-98 was T.D. Pattullo, who in later life would be premier of British Columbia, and he did leave a record of his experience.

A young man in his early twenties, Duff Pattullo in 1897 seemed to be one of Robert Service's "men that don't fit in." Since leaving school in Woodstock, Ontario, he had not been able to find a place for himself or a career that suited him. He had tried many things, but none had been to his liking and he was heavily in debt. Now, in the fall of 1897, his father's considerable Liberal Party connections landed him the position of secretary to Major J.M. Walsh, the newly appointed leader of a federal government party that was to be sent north to the Yukon to establish law and order on the goldfields. As well as being Liberals, the Pattullos were newspaper people. They had owned and published the *Woodstock Sentinel* for nearly thirty years. Duff had worked on the family newspaper for a while and he had also edited the *Reformer* in Galt for a few months in 1896. So before he left for the Yukon he arranged with his father to send back accounts of his travels to be published in the *Sentinel*

A Future Premier of British Columbia Met His Destiny on the Trail of '98

BY ROBIN FISHER

and syndicated in the Toronto *Globe* and as many other eastern newspapers as possible.

The notion of the Klondike stampede as a grand adventure on the northern frontier was largely the creation of newspaper reporters and popular authors. In contrast to the photographers who were confined to black and white, many of the writers who publicised the stampede used plenty of colour. Purple prose and hyperbole were their stock in trade. Pattullo's writing was different. He obviously hoped to sell his stories and certainly needed the money, but he did not peddle fiction. In his letters to his father his writing was crisp, simple and direct as he described the journey to the Yukon.

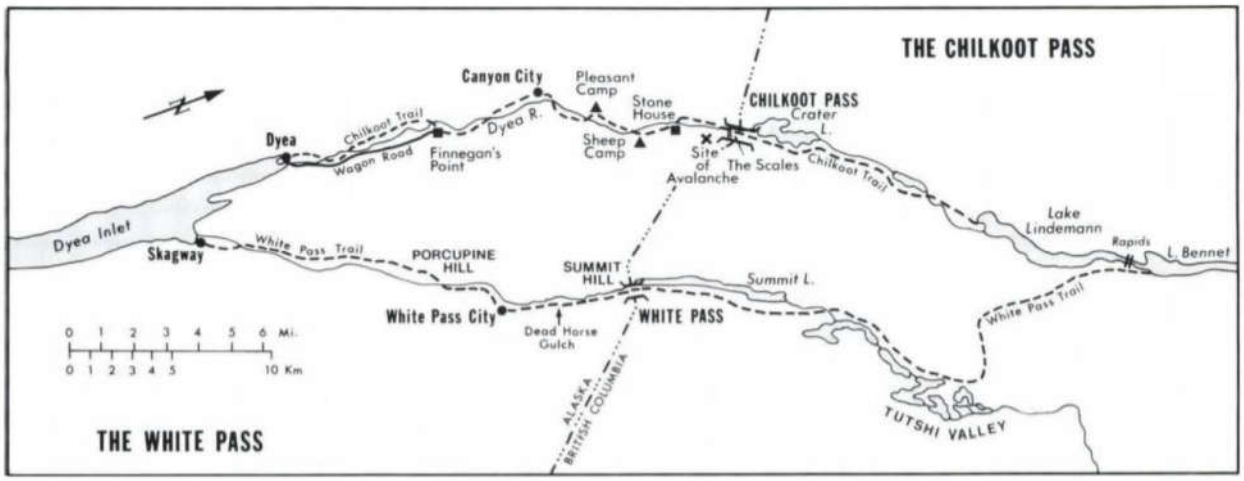
In mid-September 1897 Pattullo went up to Ottawa to meet the rest of the party assembling for the Yukon. Like Duff, nearly all of the members were there largely because of their political influence. The leader, Major James Morrow Walsh was a personal friend of Clifford Sifton, the Minister of the Interior. The veteran of the North-West Mounted Police and the hero of the confrontation with Sitting Bull and the Sioux Indians was a popular choice with the public and initially Duff was also impressed with the Major's apparent strength of character and organizational ability. Later, however, both Pattullo and the public would revise their views. Other members of the expedition included T.H. McGuire, appointed judge of the Yukon Provisional District Court; F.C. Wade, who was to be crown prosecutor and registrar of lands; two inspectors of mines, J.D. McGreggor and Captain H.H. Norwood; Captain H.A. Bliss went along as an accountant; and the Major's brother, Philip Walsh was in charge of transport. Duff was officially slated as the stenographer and typist of the party but was, in fact, secretary to Walsh. The title of secretary went to A.J. Magurn, a Toronto *Globe* correspondent whose real task was to write newspaper reports that would reflect well on the federal government. The hard work was to be done by a number of Indian packers who were hired en route.

In all, the party numbered fifty or more and it was elaborately fitted out for arctic conditions. Pattullo reported that each member was given an "eider down quilt, a pair of blankets, a wolf skin robe, a rubber sheet and a belt and a brace of revolvers with one hundred rounds of ammunition." He had to provide other supplies himself and these included: "water tight boots, moccasins, rat skin socks, chamois vest and drawers, heavy underclothing, musk-ox mittens, corduroy suits, rubber skins for fording, oil skin suit, coon skin coat and cap, deer skin leggings." If nothing else, providing for the expedition must have seriously depleted a number of species of wildlife. Thus equipped, the Walsh party, accompanied by Clifford Sifton, left Ottawa by train and headed west.

As he travelled across the prairies Pattullo was impressed by the expansiveness and optimism of a new frontier that was just opening up. "No western Canadian," he reported, "has any doubt about the future." Westerners were certain that increased population would lead to development on a grand scale, and, according to Pattullo at least, they saw the Walsh expedition as a splendid advertisement for Canada and the Canadian government's ability to assert control over a new territory. He was invigorated by the whole enterprise and told his father that he was feeling "as strong as an ox for the great undertaking."

Pattullo drew little inspiration from the prairie landscape, but when they reached the mountains he knew that he had come to another world. As the train wound its way through the Rockies he was deeply moved by the wild grandeur of the scenery. Words failed him as his thoughts and feelings outstripped his ability to express them. It was fall, and the mountain sides and valleys were, as he put it, covered with "stately trees and luxuriant shrubs with their varied hues and beautiful autumn tints." By the time he reached Vancouver he had seen enough of British Columbia's spectacular natural beauty to know that it was a very different place from the one that he had left behind. He was attracted to the wild splendour of a landscape that was so unlike the gentle, man-made geography of southern Ontario. Already acclimatizing to the west, Pattullo was becoming a British Columbian.

The expedition arrived in Vancouver on 1 October 1897 and spent a day preparing for the passage up the coast on the vessel *Quadra* under the command of Captain John Walbran. They were also joined by William Ogilvie who had spent several years exploring and surveying in the Yukon and so knew the territory into



which they were heading. The following year he would replace Walsh as the Commissioner of the Yukon Territory. He accompanied the party on the next leg of the journey towards Dawson City. Amid the clicking of cameras and the cheers of the crowd that had assembled on the dock, the *Quadra* pulled out of Vancouver and headed up the coast. The weather was less boisterous than it often is in the first week of October, but in rough seas off the Queen Charlotte Islands Duff worried that his inadequate shorthand would fail him completely when he took dictation from Sifton. He was relieved when the minister returned his notes with only a few changes saying that the work was fine given the conditions. Pattullo seemed to be in his element on the coast and, while others went down with seasickness, he felt "like a fighting cock." There were lighter moments and, when the seas were calmer, they played Ogilvie's gramophone for entertainment. After calling at the old fur trading community at Port Simpson, the *Quadra* proceeded north and, steaming up Lynn Canal on 9 October, it approached the ramshackle town of Skagway: the port of entry to the Yukon.

In 1897 Skagway was an instant outpost of American freedom, enterprise and somewhat *laissez faire* attitudes towards law and order. In contrast to their grand entry into Canadian towns, the representatives of Dominion authority received no welcome in Skagway. Since there was no civic government there were no city officials on hand to mark the arrival of the Canadian party. For the young Pattullo it was not a great loss as "The inevitable addresses from these high officials were also wanting — a cause of general thankfulness." Yet for his own part, Pattullo was intent on keeping up appearances. While others changed clothes in preparation for roughing it, Duff planned to go ashore in a Wilfrid Laurier stand-up collar and a grey fedora. Captain Bliss had already warned him that his collars could not be packed over the mountain pass, not knowing that Pattullo also had a couple of white flannel suits stashed away in his gear.

There was no wharf at Skagway, so however elaborate the preparations the actual process of getting ashore was somewhat undignified. The men of the party had to scramble "over barges, scows, houses, boats, planks, logs, rails, and posts" until they reached dry land. The main street ran from the foreshore towards the mountains behind, and walking along it for the first time was Pattullo's initiation to a wide-open, free-wheeling, western boom town. Hundreds of frame houses and huts were being thrown up in short order as wood replaced canvas as the primary building material. The business section was dominated by hotels, saloons, real estate and mining agencies and, as Pattullo understated it, everybody was "advertising himself and his wares in a most striking and conspicuous fashion." People of all classes and all walks of life were randomly thrown together. A "heterogeneous host," all rubbing shoulders as they struggled through a sea of mud. "There is a large sprinkling of gamblers and women of the street," wrote Pattullo, "but there are respectable people too." Presumably having investigated the matter with some interest, he also reported that the cost of liquor meant that there was little drunkenness in Skagway. Duff estimated that "It would cost a fellow about $25 before he could get even a moderate jag on."

Skagway was the entrance to the White Pass route into the Yukon. Pattullo climbed up the mountains behind the town as far as the station at the summit that was manned by the North-West Mounted Police. He was appalled by what he saw. The human misery and strain as men struggled up the pass was bad enough, but even worse was the sight of the oxen and horses falling off the side of the trail and plunging to their deaths below in what became known as Dead Horse Gulch. Other animals collapsed from exhaustion and

died where they lay in the middle of the trail. It has been said that Pattullo even insisted that he saw an ox trying to fling itself over the cliff rather than tread the terrible trail. Down in Skagway he had been impressed by the optimism of the people. Even those who had known hardship and had bitter or pathetic tales to tell still hoped that good fortune would overtake them. But up on the trail there was only hard reality and Duff heard stories of big, strong men starting over only to return in a couple of weeks looking twenty years older and unrecognizable to their friends. Already his advice to those thinking about coming to the Klondike was that they would be better off to stay at home.

While Pattullo and the rest of the party remained in Skagway, Walsh, Sifton and Ogilvie went ahead to reconnoitre. They went in over the Chilkoot Pass as far as Tagish Lake and back down the White Pass. On his return Sifton said that he would not send his worst enemy over the White Pass and so the expedition moved over to the other branch of the Lynn Canal and the rival town of Dyea. The supplies and equipment were manhandled across the shallows and mud flats and put ashore above the high tide mark. As Walsh's men prepared to move up to the Chilkoot they knew that, having crossed the shoreline, the going would soon be a lot tougher. By now it was the last week in October and winter would soon be upon them. Walsh tried to conceal his apprehension with a bit of bravado, saying to Duff, "I hope it is raining and snowing on that pass like the devil just to see what it is like." He was soon to have his wish.

At first the trail inland was easy and inviting, but the land revealed its true nature when they reached the canyon of the Dyea River. The canyon trail was in a "deplorable condition." It was littered with logs and boulders and the defile was so narrow that they had to lift their legs up onto the horses' necks to prevent them being crushed on either side. "Capt. Bliss' monumental figure was too much for his charger" so he was frequently obliged to get off his horse, but Pattullo and Philip Walsh rode right through without dismounting. They were told afterwards that what they had done was extremely dangerous and they were lucky not to have been killed. Had the horses missed their footing the riders would have been hurled hundreds of feet below. But, wrote Pattullo, "Fortune favoured us" and they arrived safely at Sheep Camp at the far end of the canyon.

Located in a basin at the foot of the mountains, Sheep Camp was so named because it had been a meeting place for sheep hunters. Now the area was a constantly moving chaos of men and equipment. The stampeders paused only briefly at this point to assemble their supplies and gather their physical and mental resources as they contemplated the final assault on the

The young Pattullo, taken in Woodstock before he left for the Klondike.

Chilkoot. The summit was now only about four miles away and in good weather the top of the pass was visible from Sheep Camp. But most of the 3,500 foot ascent from Dyea to the top still had to be climbed. To make matters worse the weather turned nasty as the Walsh party arrived at Sheep Camp. A strong south wind blew in sleet and snow and the packers who began ferrying the supplies up to the final slope returned with the news that the summit was impassable.

The next day Walsh directed Pattullo to lead the first group on the next stage: the climb up to the Scales. The wind was stronger and had swung around to the north so that it was ripping down the pass into their faces. By the time they reached the great boulder known as the Stone House snow was building on the trail. It was up to their armpits in a couple of hours. The last part of the day's climb was on hands and knees, but finally they crawled, exhausted, up to the Scales.

They were now at the base of the final hill, on a flat area of ground known as the Scales because everything was reweighed prior to the final climb. Pack animals could not carry loads any further and so, before

Provincial Archives of British Columbia HP2006

The Walsh party leaving Vancouver on the Quadra. Pattullo is standing third from left along the rail.

the first tramline was built in December 1897, manpower was the only way to get supplies over the summit. But the gale force winds and driving snow could make the slopes impassable for days. Not knowing how long they would have to wait for the weather to clear, Pattullo and the others pitched their tents. They dug out the snow and put up the tents on the bare rock. The huge projecting stones meant that when they threw down their blankets at night it was "like sleeping on church steeples." There were no trees above Sheep Camp so they had to send back down for firewood. The wind picked up even more overnight and they had to build a six foot wall of snow around the tent to prevent it being torn away in the gale. "Truly," wrote Pattullo, "we had struck the roughest spot on the whole trail." They soon decided that only something frightful would prevent them from crossing the summit at daylight.

With the wind raging around them all night they had little sleep, but the gale subsided about four in the morning. By nine o'clock it was clear and the sun glistened on the newly fallen snow. Already the packers were coming and going, some of them with huge loads, taking the baggage up to the top. They also made the way easier for those who followed by breaking in the trail. Pattullo's climb up the 700 feet from the Scales to the top of the Chilkoot was even a little anticlimactic after what had gone before. They struck camp at 10:30 in the morning and started up what seemed like an almost perpendicular slope. He reached the top at 11:10. In his matter-of-fact prose he noted: "Distance from Sheep Camp about five miles. Distance from Dyea from 18 to 20 miles. It seemed like a hundred."

As a member of an organized government expedition that included a large cohort of Indian packers, Pattullo only had to cross the Chilkoot once. Individual stampeders had to climb the pass over and over again. The Canadian government required that a miner have one ton of supplies before he could cross the border at the top of the pass and fifty pounds was about as much as the average man could carry in one load. For many the process of lugging their goods and chattels up the final slope took weeks. Now that he had crossed "the awful divide," Pattullo reflected for a moment on the

Collection of Mrs. D. Collison

The Walsh party in the woods between Dyea and the Chilkoot.

Landing at Dyea, Pattullo in background wearing a cap.

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The young Duff Pattullo (back row, second from left) on his way to Dawson City with a group of government officials and their Indian packers, 1897.

plight of those with whom he shared the trail. The scene at the Chilkoot had affected him deeply and his writing became a little more fulsome. "It seems to me," he told his father, "that for the man in search of riches the glamour of gold must lose some of its brilliancy and in its place come the gloom of stern reality darkening his expectations . . . To see the despair written on men's faces as they carry their packs up and up the awful hill is almost enough to make one's heart ache." His advice to the thousands who were still thinking of coming to the Yukon was simply, "don't. The chances of gold aren't worth the hazard . . . I venture to say that 75 per cent of the men who come here and do all their own packing, go back broken in health."

Nor did the hazards end at the top of the pass. Such was the reputation of the Chilkoot that many thought that once they reached the top their troubles were over. But, as Pattullo found, they had only just begun, with Dawson City still a distant objective. The Walsh party pressed on, but they had lingered too long at the coast and winter was closing in as they crossed Lake Bennett and travelled down the Yukon River. Ice was already forming on the water as they crossed Lake Laberge, and about six miles beyond Big Salmon River Pattullo very nearly lost his life as his boat was caught in an ice flow. It was clear that they would not reach Dawson City before spring break up.

Pattullo had to cool his heels for a couple of months in temperatures that often went down to sixty below as the expedition wintered over at Big Salmon. Even when the weather improved in the early spring Walsh did not go on to Dawson, but instead went back to Lake Bennett to investigate a rumour that an American relief expedition was being sent to the Yukon. Walsh wanted to ensure that nothing untoward happened at the border. There was no international incident, but on 3 April 1898 there was a tragic natural disaster near the boundary. An avalanche tore down the Chilkoot Pass close to the Scales and took the lives of more than sixty people. Pattullo appreciated once again the power of the elements as he and Walsh went down to do what they could to help. For the rest of the month, however, he found it "ducedly monotonous" as he waited at Lake Bennett for Walsh to give the word to move out. Duff had felt the brunt of the Major's temper on more than one occasion by now and he was

somewhat disenchanted with his leader. He was relieved to be moving when they finally struck north for Dawson City on 3 May.

Pattullo eventually arrived at "the City of Gold" on 21 May 1898. By the time they reached the Klondike Walsh had already decided to resign his commission and he was soon ready to leave. But Pattullo stayed on in Dawson City for nearly ten years, working at first in the gold commissioner's office and later going into private business. In a town that called the rest of the world "the outside" he had at last found a place where he could fit in.

Like many who followed the "trails of ninety eight," in later life Pattullo looked back on his time in the Yukon, and particularly the journey in to Dawson, as a formative experience. He did not indulge in Klondike nostalgia and never cared much for the poetry of Robert Service even though he did later dash off some verse imitating the style of the bard of the Yukon which he entitled "Over The Chilkoot".

We was waitin' for the Major,
We was waitin' for the word
To surmount the orful Chilkoot,
What as everyone had heard
Was a roarin', ringtail snorter,
An' as much as life was worth,
But we only stood and trampled,
Waitin' for the Major's word.

Such a orful wind was blowin',
An' the snow was pilin' high,
An' we trampled, trampled, trampled,
Till we thought that we should die,
An' the wind kept blowin' harder,
An' the snow kept pilin' more,
An' a thousand feet above us,
We could hear the Summit roar.

While clearly of no great literary merit, Pattullo's ditty goes on to express the belief that it was perseverance and devotion to duty that overcame obstacles like the Chilkoot Pass.

For Pattullo, as for many others, the real lesson of crossing the Chilkoot was what he learned about himself. His favourite book about the Klondike was one that he read in the 1930s called *Sourdough Gold*. Its author, Mary Lee Davis, explained how the true adventure of the North was not the physical struggle with the elements but the spiritual search for oneself. Like Pattullo, she had gone to the Yukon in a turmoil of spirit and out of the "mutual madness of the stampede" had put together the broken pieces of her life. The Chilkoot and the river that it led to was the highway that carried the adventurer away from the accustomed world, away from the traditional supports, to a place where one had to learn to stand alone. The Chilkoot was the pass by which one crossed the height of land that divided the one world from the other, and the climb to the summit required more strength of will than physical stamina. Pattullo also agreed with Davis' view that "indomitable cheerfulness" soon turned out to be "the most indispensible luggage a man could pack over the pass." Having crossed the divide, Pattullo wrote to his father that "We surmount our hardships up here with a careless buoyancy that I didn't think possible, and many little things down east that we considered rough we now think luxuries."

At the same time Pattullo's optimism and new found confidence in the future was not based on ignoring the realities of the present. He was very critical of those other writers about the Klondike who exaggerated its potential for easy money. Along with those travelling in the same direction as he was, Pattullo had already met several stampeders who were on the way out: men who had made it to Dawson and were quickly disillusioned. Some of the retreating miners felt that they had been misled and told Pattullo that they reckoned this to be the "Greatest country in the world for liars." So he was still concerned to convey both sides of the Klondike experience to the readers back in Woodstock. He told them that "the man who is willing to pay misery for gold may have it, but he must count the cost as well. We do not hear of the poor fellows who pay all misery and get no gold. We only hear of the wonderful strikes and none of the suffering."

As he crossed the Chilkoot, Pattullo encountered the hardships of the land and saw the suffering of men. He had not gone to the Yukon in search of gold, but, like many who did, he unexpectedly learned some things about himself that he valued more highly than any amount of colour. Although he crossed the pass several times in later years, the exhilaration of overcoming the obstacles and getting to the top for the first time never left him. As premier he was fond of telling the members of the British Columbia legislative assembly that "you will never reach the heights by refusing to climb." At the same time, the rather naive view that sheer determination was sufficient to surmount any Chilkoot was also to be an ingredient in his later political career. He would approach politics as he had done the mountain pass, with more vigour than finesse. ♦

Robin Fisher is Professor of History at Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, British Columbia.

Preserving the Past On the Trail of '98

~

By Jeffrey Murray
and Jennifer Hamilton

Photo by Jennifer Hamilton

Opposite page: This rusting power toboggan found near the summit is an example of one of the more sophisticated means of hauling supplies over the Chilkoot. Photo by Jeffrey Murray. Above: A tin can is catalogued by student archaeologist Murielle Nagy.

Although it presented some impressive obstacles, the Chilkoot Trail easily offered the greenhorn Stampeder, or "Cheechako" as he was also known, one of the cheapest and quickest routes into the Yukon interior in the Klondike gold rush of 1897-1898. This was a consideration not to be taken lightly since the majority of the participants were desperately seeking relief from the prolonged economic recession that was strangling the world during the last decade of the nineteenth century.

Although the trail was really only used for a two year period, at least 20,000 would-be miners faced its formidable challenges. Their trek over the Chilkoot might have been more tolerable if the Stampeders had only to contend with transporting a few personal effects and their mining equipment, but because of the isolation of the Yukon, each Stampeder was also required to provide his own food. Ignoring this requirement meant facing possible starvation, since Dawson City was already in the midst of a severe shortage. Indeed, the situation was serious enough that, by January 1898, Canadian officials began policing the border to ensure each person entering the Yukon carried a year's food supply, amounting to at least 1,150 pounds. When the food supplies were combined with the axes, shovels, gold pans, tents, clothing, and other necessities for staking a claim in the Klondike, the average Stampeder was usually left with an outfit weighing close to 2,000 pounds.

Although a number of entrepreneurs established freight stations at various points on the Chilkoot to help Stampeders relay their goods along the trail, many simply could not afford this service. These unfortunates faced the grueling task of breaking their outfit down into 50 to 60 pound loads and carrying it on their backs. They could expect to climb the 1,121 m. high pass and travel the entire length of the Chilkoot 30 to 40 times, covering more than 1,300 km, before everything would be safely stored at the trail's end, in either Lindeman City or Bennett.

The Chilkoot Trail is well known for both the diversity and density of artifacts left behind by the Stampeders in their mad dash for the gold fields. Most of these artifacts lie completely visible on the ground surface and are scattered throughout the entire historic corridor. As well, there are more than 10 major sites along the trail where the artifact scatter increases substantially. These areas correspond to favoured stopovers where the Stampeders would temporarily cache their supplies before relaying them further along the trail. Two additional sites, Lindeman City and Bennett, were semi-permanent tent encampments where

Glenbow-Alberta Archives, NA-2343-5

The supply cache at the summit of the Chilkoot Pass. Similar cache areas were spaced at regular intervals along the length of the trail.

the Stampeders sometimes spent as much as an entire winter building the boats which would carry them down the Klondike River system to Dawson City.

Surprisingly, the most serious problem facing the historical remnants of the Chilkoot Trail is not that caused by the harsh northern environment. Although natural forces are certainly taking their toll, such forms of depreciation are usually gradual. Over the long term, natural forces are generally not as damaging as the acts of vandalism deliberately or accidently perpetrated by the modern day hiker. Recently a camp fire was found in which hikers collected and burned a Klondike sled. In another incident hikers removed the wooden supports from the stone cribbing used by the Stampeders as the anchor point for an aerial tramway causing the entire structure to collapse. Although efforts have been made to protect the cultural heritage of the Chilkoot Trail, this activity has certainly gone on in the past and, unfortunately, will likely continue in the future. It can be expected to escalate with the increase in visitation that is likely to occur once the area is declared a national historic park.

Since it is almost impossible to remove the threat of such destructive forces, certain measures can be taken to minimize loss of the Chilkoot's history through the preservation of the *information* associated with the remains. By making an inventory of the cultural resources, an archival data base can at least be created which will provide future generations with a record of what was present on the trail at a given moment in time.

During the 1984 summer field season, Parks Canada sponsored eight weeks of archaeological investigations to assess the feasibility of such a project. The investigations concentrated on recording the features and artifacts at three of the larger sites on the trail: Lindeman City, Bennett, and Long Lake. These three sites were selected because it was felt they would present a reasonable representation of the cultural resource base and the problems to be encountered. As well, Lindeman and Bennett are likely to be included as part of any future development that Parks Canada may initiate and, consequently, should be investigated immediately.

The three sites examined in 1984 were divided by a grid system. By using survey instruments, a series of squares, three metres wide, were established across the sites. Each square on the grid was given a unique number and its coordinates tied into a central point. The latter then served as a permanent reference point by which all recording could be spatially related. When the artifacts were removed from the ground it was possible to use the grid number to relate the find back to its original position.

Normally, establishing a site grid is a straightforward process. But most of the archaeological sites on

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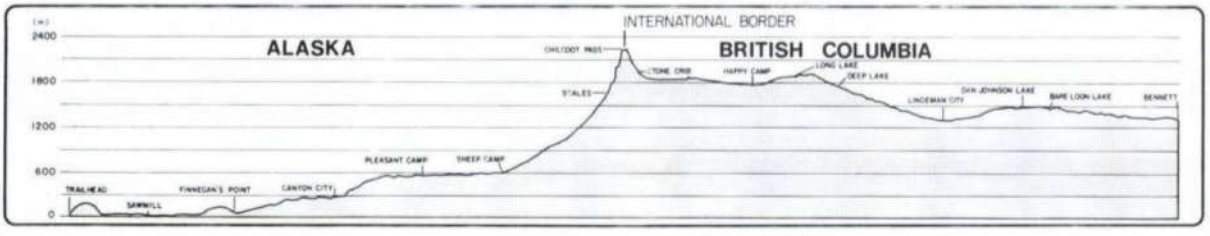
A panorama of the tent city at Bennett, 1 June 1898.

the Chilkoot Trail are located in mountainous terrain which presented a number of logistical problems, especially where the weather was concerned. In some cases, it was necessary to contend with less than ideal living conditions and very poor visibility due to cold driving rain and fog.

Once a site grid was established, a team of two to four people would systematically traverse the area looking for features and artifacts. When a feature was found, each was assigned a number and was photographed. Then it was described in terms of its size, construction methods, and associated artifacts. The artifacts in turn were placed in the inventory computerized coding system. Of the more than 3,100 artifacts recorded, only a representative sample of 200 were collected; the remainder were left as originally found. Generally, artifacts were collected only if they were one of a kind or if they were appropriate for a museum display.

The majority of features recorded at the three sites on the Chilkoot Trail were tent platforms. These were generally distinguished by a rectangular alignment of rocks which had been used to secure the base of a canvas tent. Often a space or doorway was visible in the alignment and sometimes it was even possible to distinguish a small rock platform that had probably supported a wood burning stove.

Privy pits and garbage dumps were sometimes found closely situated to the tent platforms. The dumps usually provided a good sample of the different types of



Map by D. Elrick

Photo by Jeffrey Murray

Many of the buildings on the trail, like this old root cellar, are in an advanced state of decay.

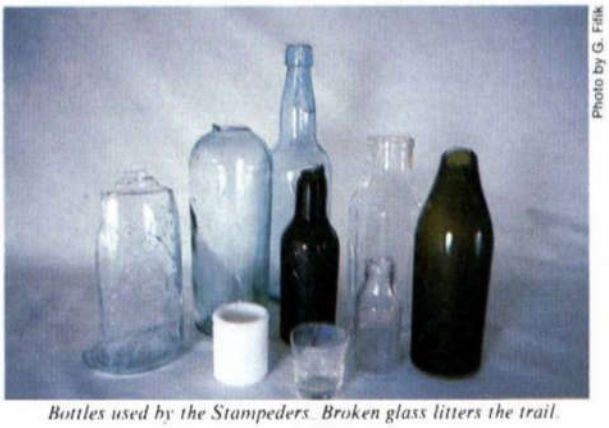


Photo by G. Frlik

Bottles used by the Stampeders. Broken glass litters the trail.

This pile of cattle skulls at Bennett was one of the most curious finds. Each skull has a single bullet hole in the forehead.

Photo by Jeffrey Murray

Wooden artifacts, like this old wagon, are in peril from erring hikers seeking firewood.

Photo by Jeffrey Murray

Photo by Jeffrey Murray

A set of tram wheels at the Homan River saw mill where the Stampeders cut lumber for Bennett's boat building industry.

Portable canvas boats cached high on the pass near the Alaska border. Why the boats were never used remains a mystery.

Photo by Jeffrey Murray

food carried by the Stampeders into the Klondike. Interestingly, of the ten dumps recorded, each was characterized by only a few different product types and brand names. For example, more than six different canned milk brands were found by the archaeologists at various points along the trail; however, only one or two of these types were found in each dump. This distribution suggests each dump was only used by a certain number of Stampeders and also has implications with regard to their buying habits and taste preferences.

Eventually the information collected on the artifacts and features of the Chilkoot will be used to re-examine the day-to-day life of the Stampeder. In the past, most studies on the gold rush have focused on the more sensational phenomena connected with the event, such as the exploits of individual miners or the more dramatic episodes surrounding the trek into the Klondike. Unfortunately, little attention has been given to the Stampeders as a group. While archival sources may contain numerous descriptions of the hardships faced by various individuals on the Chilkoot Trail, the historical documents generally have little to say about the more mundane aspects of day-to-day life at Lindeman City and Bennett where most people had to wait for spring break-up before continuing their journey to the gold fields. Almost nothing is known on how these camps were organized. Were there attempts to divide the camps according to the ethnic and social backgrounds of the Stampeders? What kinds of public services were maintained by the communities? Was there any recognition of streets or paths? What sanitary precautions were taken? What did the community do for recreation?

As already mentioned, the Chilkoot presented some impressive obstacles for the would-be miner. All his material goods, including most foods, had to be imported into the region, and because of its mountainous terrain, some rather ingenious methods were developed by which they could be transported over the trail. It is possible that these constraints also influenced the types of goods they brought with them and possibly also the methods by which products were packaged and carried.

When the Chilkoot artifact inventory is completed, it will be possible for the archaeologist to compare this record with that provided by historical documents. Just as the modern day consumer selects only certain items from the wide variety of goods available in the market place, the nineteenth century Stampeder must have also preferred only certain products. It should prove particularly rewarding for the archaeologist to identify not only the various types of goods selected by the Stampeder but also to establish why these were purchased over others.

This task will entail a comparison of the artifacts found on the ground with the multitude of products offered for sale by the West Coast outfitters in their catalogues from the late nineteenth century. Once this comparison is established, it should be possible to ask some pertinent questions about life on the trail. For example, what food types did the Stampeder prefer; how were these foods packaged; are the artifacts found on the trail today reflective of only nineteenth century technological limitations in the packing industry; or are these products also representative of other restrictions such as the size of the group with whom the Stampeder preferred to travel?

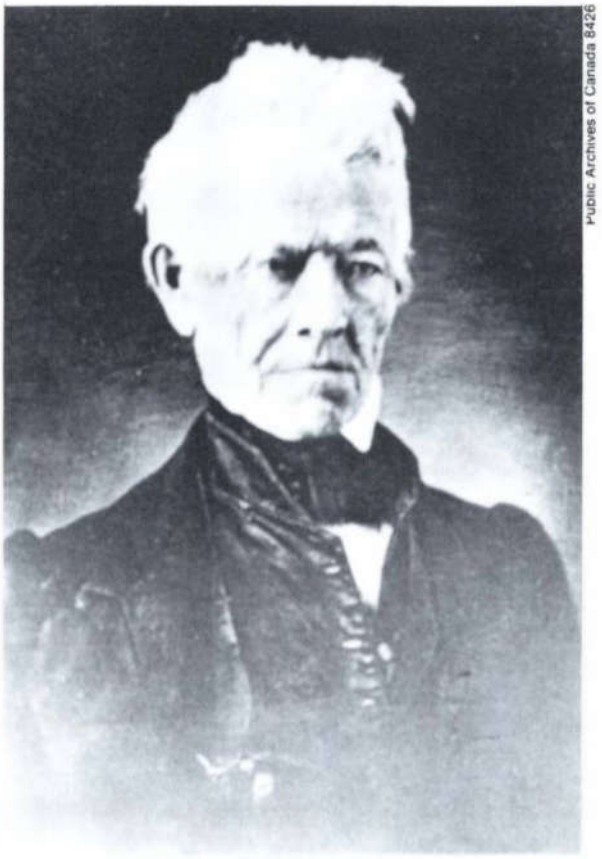
It is possible that, in his haste to reach Dawson City, the average Stampeder was not particularly selective of the goods he carried. He may have bought anything and everything the West Coast outfitters offered in order to spend as little time as necessary in this endeavour. The faster he could get to the gold fields, the sooner he would be able to stake his claim. Alternatively, the Stampeder may have preferred to keep his capital investment to a minimum in order to maximize potential profits. Despite the variety of goods that were available for purchase, only the cheaper items may have been preferred. A minimal investment would, of course, help to reduce losses in the event the Stampeder was unlucky and would also serve to increase profits if a substantial claim was discovered.

Establishing an artifact inventory in an area the size of the Chilkoot Trail is by no means an easy task. The logistical problems of keeping a crew in an isolated area for extended periods can alone prove arduous, even without the added responsibilities of contending with fragile artifacts and the numerous records that such a project generates. But these problems prove insignificant when compared to the long term benefits that will be obtained. Not only will the project be contributing to the preservation of a heritage which faces eventual depreciation and irretrievable loss, it will add new pages to our understanding of an event that shaped the development of our Northern frontier. ◆

Jeffrey S. Murray was formerly a regional archaeologist with Parks Canada. He is now an archivist with the National Map Collection, Public Archives of Canada, Ottawa. Jennifer F.A. Hamilton is a material culture researcher with Parks Canada in Winnipeg.

'Cumcloups' and the River of Time

By Ken Favrholdt



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David Stuart

This year marks the 175th anniversary of the founding of the first fur trade post at Kamloops by David Stuart of John Jacob Astor's Pacific Fur Company.

Stuart, a Scot from Perthshire, led the party that established the first American settlement on the Pacific Coast at Astoria and the late summer of 1811 found him at the company post on Lake Okanogan preparing for a journey into the hinterland in search of a likely location for a new fur trading post. He and his companions found the place they were looking for at the meeting place of the North and South Thompson Rivers, called by the Shuswap Indians, *"Cumcloups"*.

Stuart's group spent that fall and winter at Kamloops, trading their small stock of goods for furs, especially beaver, which were plentiful in the region.

In February of 1812 they returned to Astoria with 2,500 beaver skins which were eventually shipped to China, earning large profits for the company.

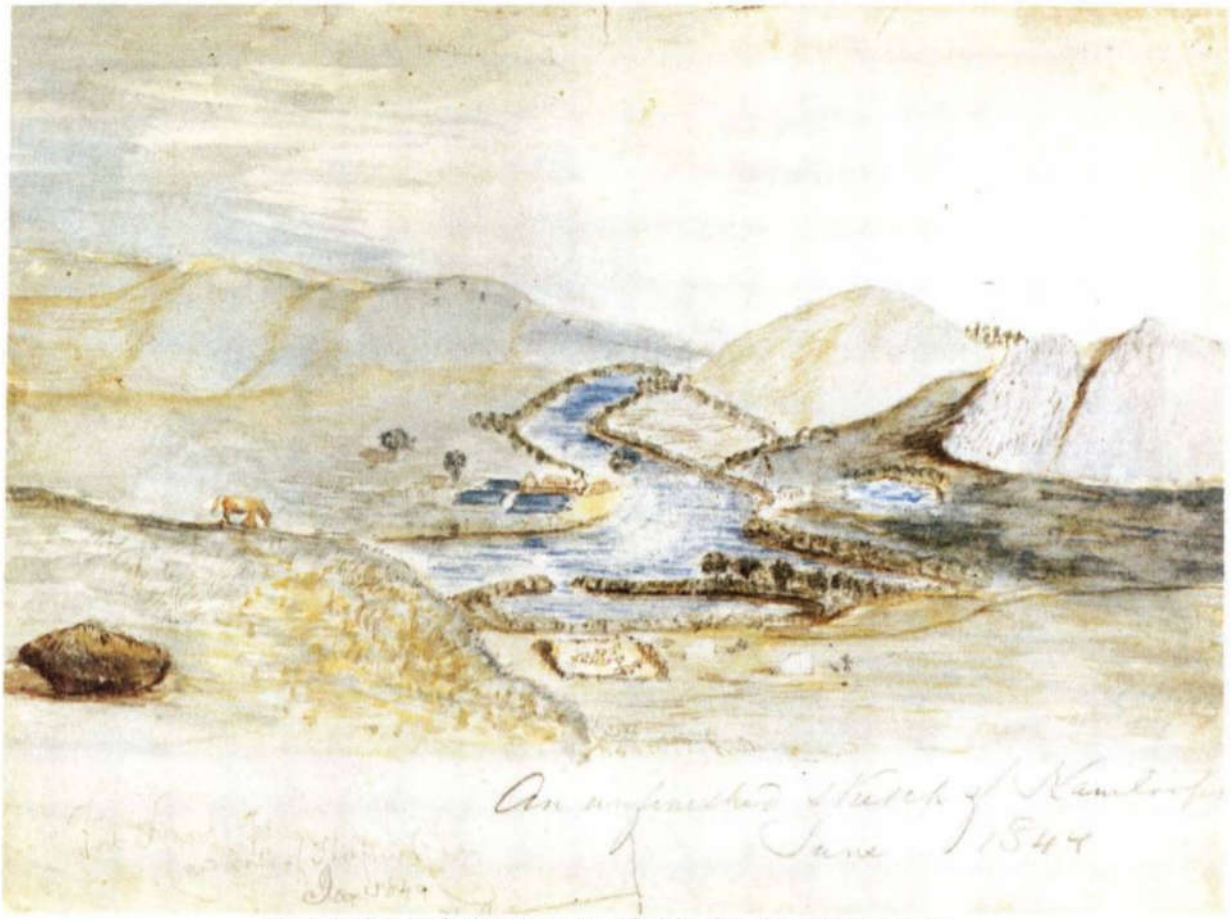
Upon hearing Stuart's favourable report of the Thompson Valley, partners in Astor's company were convinced he should return to Kamloops to establish a trading post. A fort was duly built in September of 1812 near the confluence of the North and South Thompson, although the exact site is not known.

A few weeks after Stuart had built the American post at Kamloops, the Canadian Nor'Westers led by Joseph Larocque arrived in the area and quickly established their own fort "alongside" the Astorians. Although the North West Company and the Astorians were rivals in the fur trade, the competition at Kamloops was friendly; Stuart and Larocque likely knew each other from their trading experiences in the East. In an unfamiliar country, it was better to co-operate than be enemies.

Joseph Felix Larocque was one of Simon Fraser's assistants in the exploration of New Caledonia, the northern Interior of B.C. Born about 1787 at L'Assomption, Quebec, he entered the fur trade at the age of 14, and joined the North West Company at 17. His rise in the business was aided by his unusual facility in several Indian languages.

When Fraser returned to Canada disappointed after the exploration of the river he had hoped was Lewis and Clark's Columbia, Larocque stayed on in New Caledonia, expanding the fur trade there and finally, in the fall of 1811, explored southwards toward the Thompson Valley.

Daniel Harmon, one of the few chroniclers of life in New Caledonia during this period, mentioned in September 1813 that Kamloops was built the previous autumn by "La Roque [sic] and McDonell for the North West Company but was abandoned in the spring." Larocque's Nor'Westers and Stuart's Asto-



"An unfinished sketch of Kamloops, June 1849" by Alexander Caulfield Anderson.

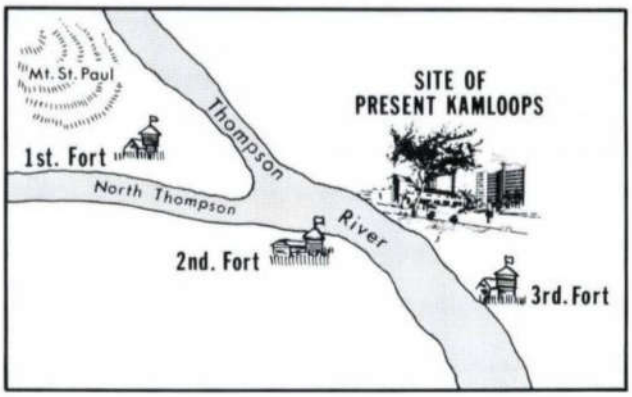
rians, however, did not just vanish from the scene. But the period of co-existence between the two companies was to be short-lived.

With each company's fair share of the winter's trade at Kamloops, Larocque and Stuart travelled together to Astoria in the spring of 1813. On their arrival they learned of the war that had broken out between the United States and Great Britain which affected Astor's supply shipments to the Columbia. Though Stuart was opposed, the North West Company negotiated for the sale of the Astorians' western posts which could not carry on, including Fort She-waps, the American post at Kamloops.

The transaction, at which Larocque was present, gave the North West Company a virtual monopoly of the trade on the Pacific Slope. However, by the terms of the peace treaty ending the war, the Americans were allowed to continue trading in the Oregon country, but it was not until the 1840s that Americans again entered the far west in any numbers.

After the sale of the Astorian interests, Larocque returned to the Interior with 71 men destined for the outposts of Okanagan, Spokane and Kamloops. The Astorian fort at Kamloops presumably became part of Larocque's post which was maintained by the Nor'Westers and was probably used still later by the Hudson's Bay Company.

When the Hudson's Bay Company took over the North West Company through amalgamation in 1821, a new fort was likely built on a different site, probably just south of the present St. Joseph's Church on the present Kamloops Indian Band reserve. This location



would have provided a strategic view of both branches of the Thompson River. The post had bastions probably at diagonal corners and a picket wall enclosing several buildings. It housed up to a dozen employees, not counting women and children.

The only descriptive clue to the appearance of the HBC fort at this location is by Chief Trader Donald Manson in 1841. He took charge of Kamloops after Chief Factor Samuel Black was murdered — the most serious incident that occurred at the fort — and wrote "... I found the Fort in a wretched state of defence, the houses and store being completely rotten, and were it not for the number of Props, placed against them, they would have been torn down long ere now, the Fort Pickets and Bastions are even worse than this ...".

The HBC saw the opportunity to relocate to the west side of the North Thompson River. A major reason for this move, as well, was to connect Kamloops with Fort Alexandria on the upper Fraser River via a shorter fur brigade route that did not have to cross the North Thompson River with horses. In 1846, when the boundary between British and American possessions was finally established at the 49th parallel, these horse brigades that continued south from Kamloops originally to the Columbia were redirected to the Fraser along routes explored by Alexander Caulfield Anderson.

The oldest picture we have of Kamloops shows the HBC fort after the relocation to the North Kamloops site in a sketch made by Anderson in 1849. The unfinished watercolour appears to show a picketed fort, and possibly a bastion, outbuildings, planted fields and horse corrals. The interior of the fort, from information in later journals of the period, included a store, dwelling house, privy, kitchen and men's house. Another painting, possibly made by Chief Trader John Tod in 1860, gives credence to the existence of at least one bastion.

The gold rush to the area in the early 1860s coincided with the waning of the fur trade. Even so, the HBC decided to rebuild the fort again on the south side of the river, a kilometre west of the present Overlanders Bridge which crosses the Thompson River. William Fortune and August Schubert, two of the famous party of Overlanders who arrived at Kamloops in 1862, helped in the construction of the new post. At this period pickets and bastions were unnecessary for protection, although smaller fences were still needed to enclose the gardens and livestock. An early photo of the post, taken by Charles Gentile in 1865, shows a gable-roofed dwelling house, a store house and

Fort Kamloops, oil on canvas, attributed to Chief Trader John Tod, painted between 1842 and 1862.

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Kamloops Museum & Archives

Jean Baptiste Lolo (St. Paul) with his wife and daughters in front of the home built for them by the HBC in the early 1840s. It became the first Kamloops museum in 1937 and is on display in the present museum.

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Photo by Charles Gentile of the HBC post at Kamloops, circa 1865.

another building then used as a restaurant. Catering to miners and early settlers had become as profitable as the fur trade by this time.

In 1871, pioneer James McIntosh purchased 100 acres of land just east of the Hudson's Bay Company property. In the same year James McKenzie, a former HBC employee, opened the first store in opposition to the Company near the south end of the present Overlanders Bridge. The arrival of the Canadian Pacific Railway in 1885 was the deathknell of the HBC's business on the outskirts of the growing village of Kamloops. Eventually, just after the incorporation of Kamloops in 1893, the HBC moved their operation into the heart of town.

The third and final HBC trading post, however, stood until 1941 when the property was finally acquired for an auto camp. When the old fort buildings were being demolished, it was mentioned that gold dust was discovered under the floorboards and that newspapers on the walls bore dates as ancient as 1841, a century old.

Sometime before 1936 a log building made of squared, fitted timbers cut by a broadaxe was "discovered" by Mr. David Power of Kamloops. The building had been formerly owned by Ah Mee, a well-known Chinese merchant around Kamloops for many years, until it was abandoned in a field 17 miles north of town on the east side of the Thompson River.

It is speculated, but yet to be proved conclusively, that the building found by Power may have been the very one built for Jean Baptiste Lolo, or St. Paul, as he came to be known. St. Paul was a Métis who came to Kamloops in the early days of the fur trade and was an invaluable employee of the Hudson's Bay Company for his knowledge of several Indian languages, as well as French and English. When the HBC fort was moved from the east to the west side of the North Thompson in 1842-43, St. Paul was granted a house at the Company's expense. It was probably made with materials from the older fort buildings.

St. Paul, so nicknamed for his Catholic baptism, set up his own trading business on friendly terms with the HBC traders.

He lived there until his death in 1868; his cabin, presumably, became a part of the Indian village that clustered around the Catholic mission church built in 1846.

When Mr. Power came across the log building, he immediately recognized the post-on-sill "piece sur piece" construction common to buildings of the HBC. Power purchased the building, dismantled it log by log, and stored it away.

The cabin was subsequently rebuilt in Riverside Park where it became the first museum for Kamloops. St. Paul's house, refurbished to resemble a trading post, is now on display at the Kamloops Museum, a link with the past. ◆

Ken Favrholdt is curator and archivist at the Kamloops Museum and Archives, Kamloops, British Columbia.

SAMUEL HEARNE, NATURALIST

The great HBC explorer and fur trader was also an expert on northern wildlife

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By Stuart and Mary Houston

Samuel Hearne's exploits as an explorer, fur trader and author have been appreciated for more than two centuries. He was the first European to reach the Arctic coast of North America, travelling on foot with a group of Chipewyan Indians from Churchill to the mouth of the Coppermine River. He founded in 1774 the first inland trading post of the Hudson's Bay Company at Cumberland House, now Saskatchewan's oldest settlement. As James Marsh has written, Hearne's "literary artistry . . . secured his fame in letters." Yet modern naturalists rarely refer to Hearne's original and often incredibly apt observations. Ironically, only the historians appear to appreciate what a good naturalist he was.

Richard Glover, in his introduction to the 1958 edition of Hearne's *Journey*, recognized that "Samuel Hearne was, of course, another first class observer and reporter — in fact, a much better naturalist than [Andrew] Graham . . . head and shoulders superior to every other North American naturalist who preceded Audubon." Glover singled out Hearne's accounts of the Whooping Crane and the beaver as especially well done.

Hearne was a century ahead of his time in describing the habits of wild animals. He was the first to give recognizable descriptions of the Ross' Goose, Musk-ox and Wood Buffalo, and accounts of the habits of the Arctic Ground Squirrel and Arctic Hare. He was the first to describe the nesting of the White-crowned Sparrow, on the ground at the root of a dwarf willow or a gooseberry.

Pennant had not described the Ross' Goose in his 4-volume *Arctic Zoology* in 1786. Hearne described how the base of its bill was studded with little knobs about the size of peas. This small goose was scarce at Churchill but more common 200 or 300 miles to the northwest. It is of interest that another well-known fur trader and naturalist, Bernard Rogan Ross, wrote a series of articles in the *Canadian Naturalist and Geologist* in 1861 and 1862 dealing with the birds and mammals of the Mackenzie River district. He listed the "Horned-wavy Goose" of Hearne as a species still without a scientific name. The omission was quickly corrected that very year, when John Cassin gave the name of *Anser Rossii* to the specimen sent by Ross from Great Slave Lake. Cassin remarked that "this species has never again been noticed from the time of Hearne until the time of the receipt of the present specimens from Mr. Robert Kennicott, an enterprising young naturalist, now in the northern regions of British America, but has been constantly insisted on as a valid species in his letters to the Smithsonian Institution by Mr. Bernard R. Ross, an enthusiastic naturalist and careful observer in the service of the Hudson Bay Company." Bernard Rogan Ross, "a tart Londonderry Irishman," was the chief trader at Fort Simpson, in charge of the entire Mackenzie district. Robert Kennicott had been the stimulus for men like Bernard

Samuel Hearne, from his book

Rogan Ross and Roderick Ross MacFarlane to collect specimens.

It is fortunate that Hearne's journal was published; the story behind its publication is worth recounting. Lapérouse, the celebrated French navigator, in August 1782, led the French capture of Fort Churchill, where Hearne was in command of the Hudson's Bay Company fort. Lapérouse found and claimed Hearne's journal as a fair prize. Lapérouse returned Hearne's journal, already under revision, as Richard Glover said, "on the express condition that he publish it." Whether or not Lapérouse deserves as much credit as he has been given for the eventual publication, it was a gentlemanly gesture. Hearne made a further brazen request: that Lapérouse let him take one of the fort's trading sloops which had been seized as a fair prize of war. Lapérouse acceded and Hearne sailed the little boat on a risky journey from Hudson Strait directly back to Stromness in the Orkney Islands, a big improvement over being taken prisoner back to Cadiz, Spain.

When Hearne returned to Churchill to rebuild the fort in 1783 he was still working on his book. He retired from the fur trade in 1787. In October 1792 Hearne submitted his manuscript for publication and received the high price of £200. A month later, when he died of "the dropsy", he was only 47. The book did not appear in print until 1795.

Hearne's journal, readily obtained from most libraries, is one of the greatest travel narratives ever written. His frank and often understated accounts of hardship and starvation are still well worth reading. Surprisingly few of Hearne's usages are dated. The term "willick" for the guillemot, one of the smaller seabirds of the Auk family, is now obsolete. He also used the word "non-descript" as it was correctly used at the time, to mean a species not yet described to science.

Hearne owned "an excellent microscope". Being interested in the lice and other parasites on the Northern Lemming, he tried to examine them under the microscope. However the lens became damp with the moisture from his breath in his cold winter room.

Hearne gives us a lot of information about how the native Indians interacted with wildlife. He tells how the Chipewyan Indians were fascinated by the Pine Marten, the member of the weasel family most adapted to tree living. The commonest names for Chipewyan Indian girls in Hearne's time were related to the Marten, for example White Marten, Summer Marten, or Marten's heart. (John Richardson and John Franklin 50 years later mentioned "Smiling Marten", the wife of Akaiyazzeh, who was one of their Copper Indian guides.)

The Chipewyan canoes, smaller and lighter than those of the Cree Indians, were, like their snowshoes, built only with a hatchet, a knife, a file and an awl. Indians would sometimes carry these light birchbark canoes across land for 100 or even 150 miles before putting them into the water, to cross an unfordable river, to kill swimming caribou, or to chase swans, geese and ducks in the molting season.

Hearne was a student of practical zoology. He described how the skins of the caribou became fit for clothing in early August. It required the prime parts of 8 to 10 caribou skins to make a complete suit of warm clothing for a Chipewyan Indian.

Hearne preceded John Richardson by 50 years in telling how a warble-fly, squeezed out of a caribou skin, was a delicacy, always eaten rough and alive, and "said, by those who liked them, to be as fine as gooseberries." Many larvae were as large as the first joint of Hearne's little finger. Warble-fly larvae and domestic lice were the only two things which Hearne saw his Indian companions eat, which he himself could not stomach.

Hearne provided excellent accounts of the Wood Buffalo, Plains Buffalo and moose. He was fond of buffalo meat and particularly fond of buffalo tongue, which he termed "very delicate". The young calves cut out of the buffalo belly were reckoned an even greater delicacy, but were eaten on the spot, whereas the tongues were often brought down to York Factory as a great luxury. Hearne was also fond of caribou meat. He lived on it entirely for more than 12 months and "scarcely ever wished for a change of food."

Hearne's powers of observation are nowhere better revealed than in his description of the moose with its long large head, rather similar to that of a horse, but

Barren Geeſe.

BARREN GEESE. Theſe are the largeſt of all the ſpecies of Geeſe that frequent Hudſon's Bay, as they frequently weigh ſixteen or ſeventeen pounds. They differ from the Common Grey Gooſe in nothing but in ſize, and in the head and breaſt being tinged with a ruſty brown. They never make their appearance in the Spring till the greateſt part of the other ſpecies of Geeſe are flown Northward to breed, and many of them remain near Churchill River the whole Summer. This large ſpecies are generally found to be males, and from the exceeding ſmallneſs of their teſticles, they are, I ſuppoſe, incapable of propagating their ſpecies. I believe I can with truth ſay, that I was the firſt European who made that remark, though they had always been diſtinguiſhed by the name of the Barren Geeſe; for no other reaſon than that of their not being known to breed. Their fleſh is by no means unpleaſant. though always hard and tough; and their plumage is ſo thick before they begin to moult, that one bird uſually produces a pound of fine feathers and down, of a ſurpriſing elaſticity.

Brent Geeſe.

BRENT GEESE. This ſpecies certainly breed in the remoteſt parts of the North, and ſeldom make their appearance at Churchill River till late in Auguſt or September. The rout they take in Spring is unknown, and their breeding-places have never been diſcovered by any Indian in Hudſon's Bay. When they make their appearance at Churchill

A sample page from Hearne's book, "A Journey From Prince of Wales's Fort in Hudson's Bay to the Northern Ocean", published in 1795.

with nostrils twice as large. He found that a moose's acute hearing rendered it difficult to approach and kill on land.

The gallbladder is absent in the moose and caribou, he noted. He also listed animals with an os penis (a length of bone formed between the two blood reservoirs, the *corpora cavernosa;* it aids the animal in maintaining an erection): bear, wolf, wolverine, fox, marten, otter, fisher, mink, skunk, ermine and long-tailed weasel — more information than is given in a modern text of comparative vertebrate morphology and more than one can find in an hour's search through a large veterinary college library.

Hearne understood sexual dimorphism, the male Willow Ptarmigan being larger. His description of the variable size of ptarmigan showed he had some understanding of what was later to be described as Gaussian distribution.

Some of his observations on the Ruffed Grouse were a century ahead of their time. He told how this species makes its nest on the ground, generally at the foot of a tree, and lays 12 or 14 eggs. He realized, as many others did not, that the noise of "drumming" was made by "clapping their wings with such a force, that at half a mile distance it resembles thunder."

He noted that the pouch at the base of the pelican's beak had a capacity of three quarts, that, in the 1770s as today, muskrat houses were favourite nesting sites for Canada Geese, and that the eggs of the Trumpeter Swan were so large that one was a sufficient meal for a moderate man without bread or any other addition.

Hearne examined the "windpipes" of both the Whistling and Trumpeter Swan. Although he noted that the convoluted windpipe passed into the broad and hollow breast bone of the swan and after passing the length of the sternum, returned into the chest to join the lungs, he erroneously reported that both species had identical anatomy even though their notes were quite different in pitch.

Hearne corrected some of the mistaken conclusions of his predecessor, James Isham, and of his contemporary, Andrew Graham. Isham and Graham had erred in claiming that beaver houses had several apartments for various uses and that there were "slave-beavers"; Hearne also pointed out that the glans penis of the caribou is not shed annually.

Hearne provided one of the earliest accounts of the Passenger Pigeon, flying in large flocks in the interior near Cumberland House, where he saw 12 killed at one shot. The Whooping Crane even then was not common, usually seen only in pairs and not very often. It was good eating. The wing bones were so long and large that they were sometimes made into flutes.

Hearne was the first to recognize that two different species of curlew, the Hudsonian Curlew and the Eskimo Curlew, occurred at Hudson Bay. But he did not restrict his attention to edible birds; he also described small birds such as the chickadee.

By no means was his interest restricted to mammals, birds and fish; he described mussels, crabs, scallops, frogs, and spiders. Hearne recognized that the Cloudberry or Bake-apple berry was useful in preventing and treating scurvy.

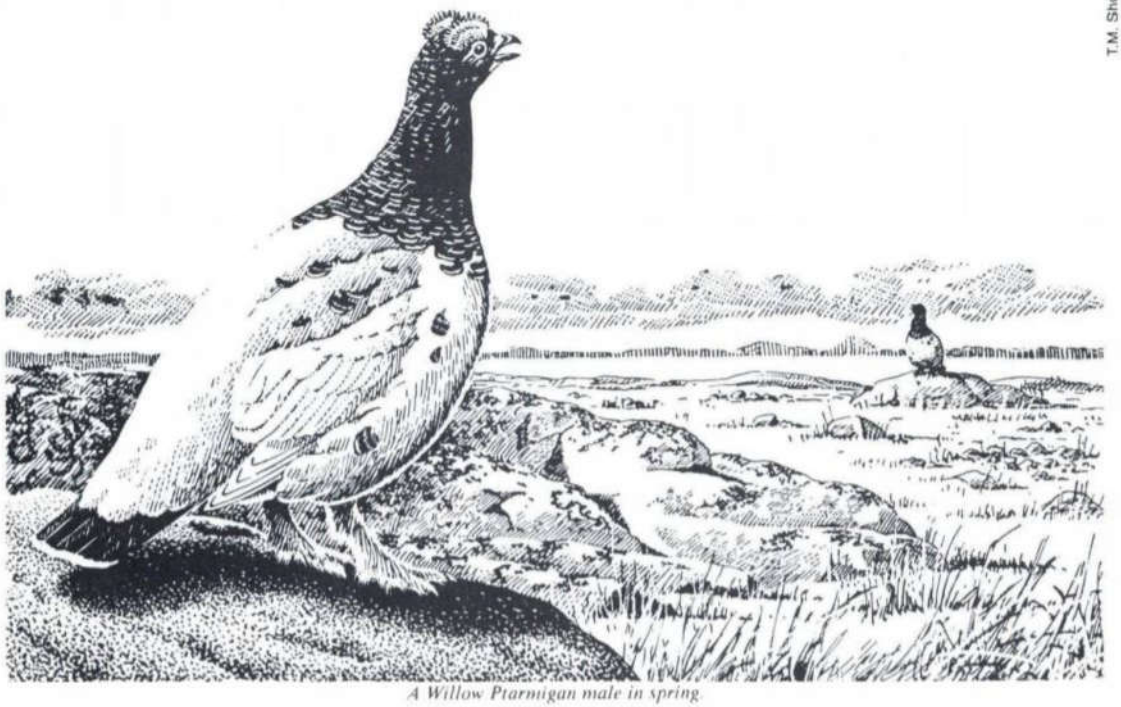
He understood well the concept of bird migration, at a time when scientists in England, including the celebrated Sir Daines Barrington, were suggesting that swallows spent the winter under water. He also recognized that other species such as the ptarmigan and Alpine Hare were year-round residents. He described the Trumpeter Swan as the first species of waterfowl to return in spring, sometimes as early as late March, before the ice of the rivers had broken up. At that time they frequented the open waters of falls and rapids.

Hearne provided valuable information concerning the numbers of some species of animals in the fur trade days. In January 1775 at Cumberland House the men brought back 26 grouse on one occasion and on another day 13 sledge loads of elk meat were brought to the fort.

Within half a mile of Churchill as many as 40 Arctic foxes could be killed in one night, while during one winter 120 foxes would be destroyed by other foxes in the traps. In 1774 Hearne's men killed 11 black bears in one day of canoe travel between York Factory and Cumberland House. At Anawd Lake in the North West Territories 20 or 30 hares could be snared in a single night. One Indian could kill 20 Spruce Grouse in a day with his bow and arrow. Some Indians would kill upward of a 100 snow geese in a day, whereas the most expert of the English hunters would think it a good day's work to kill 30. At Albany Fort there were sufficient geese that they could in one season salt 60 hogsheads of them for winter consumption. Arctic Terns, ranked by Hearne among "the elegant part of the feathered creation," occurred in flocks of several hundreds; bushels of their eggs were taken on an island of very small circumference.

He once saw a flock of over 400 Willow Ptarmigan near the Churchill River. The Indians framed nets on stakes, placed over gravel used as bait, to entice Ptarmigans to gather under the net. When the stake was pulled to drop the net on top of the birds, three people could catch up to 300 in one morning. In the winter of 1786 Mr. Prince at Churchill caught 204 ptarmigan with two separate pulls. Ptarmigan feathers made excellent beds and the feathers were sold at the rate of 3 pence per pound of feathers. The smaller Rock Ptarmigan would not go under nets but up to 120 could be shot in a few hours.

Hearne did make a few errors, in instances where he may have relied on natives' hearsay rather than upon his own observation. Most flawed is his account



T.M. Shortt

A Willow Ptarmigan male in spring

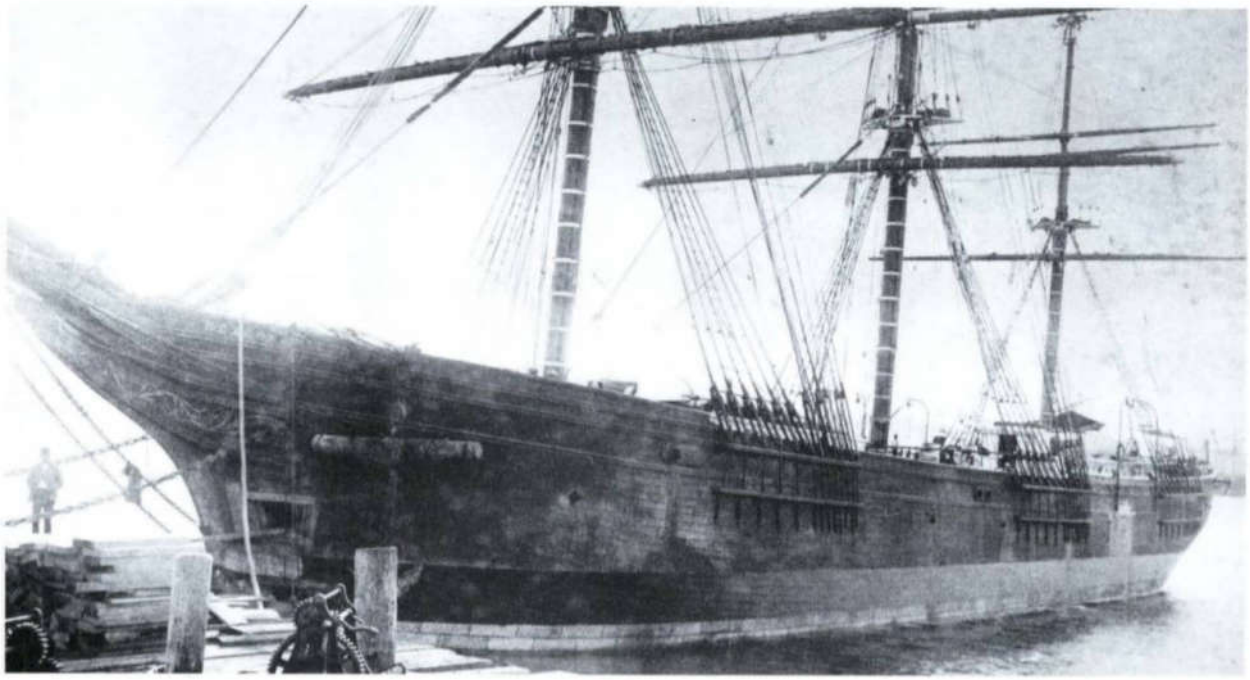
of the copulation of the porcupine: "Their mode of copulation is singular, for their quills will not permit them to perform that office in the usual mode, like other quadrupeds. To remedy this inconvenience, they sometimes lie on their sides and meet in that manner; but the usual mode is for the male to lie on his back, and the female to walk over him, (beginning at his head,) till the parts of generation come in contact." Such misconceptions persisted for nearly 200 years after Hearne. Even as late as 1935, in his definitive monograph concerning the porcupine, Taylor was forced to admit that "available accounts of the actual mating process do not agree." Finally in 1946 Albert R. Shadle observed and photographed porcupine copulation in his laboratory at the University of Buffalo. The male stands on his tail and hind legs to mount the female while she holds her tail forward over her back. The confusing fact is that a few days prior to and separate from copulation, the porcupines will often meet, belly to belly, as part of their courting procedure.

From our point of view his account of the large subspecies of the Canada Goose best reveals Hearne's scientific bent of mind. He met these very large geese on the barren grounds. Most naturalists who read Hearne appear to have walked right by this one. He did not call them the Barren Geese because they summered on the barren grounds, but rather because of the "exceeding smallness of their testicles".

The modern status of this large goose has been somewhat controversial. Hanson's book, *The Giant Canada Goose*, published in 1965, presents the results of recent research. Hanson believes that the Canada Geese nesting in Minnesota and Southern Manitoba and Saskatchewan belong to the giant race, *Branta canadensis maxima*, previously believed to be extinct. This race is characterized by a wing span of six feet or more in adult males, an unusually long neck, and frequently a white spot above the eye. They weigh anywhere from 8 pounds for an immature female to 18 pounds for an adult male, certainly reaching the 16 to 17 pounds weight cited by Hearne.

Hanson also tells about the capture of flightless Canada Geese on the tundra in Keewatin Territory. Some of these immature birds carried bands previously placed on them in Minnesota and Manitoba. They had journeyed about 1,000 miles north in order to molt. Because they were not breeding they arrived in the Far North later in the year than the other geese, as Hearne said. Since they did not breed that summer, they had small testicles. Thus it took nearly two centuries to elucidate the precise scientific explanation for the phenomenon noted with such insight by Samuel Hearne, the most talented of the early naturalists on this continent. ♦

Dr. Stuart Houston and Mary Houston live in Saskatoon. They have written extensively on northern subjects, particularly with reference to wildlife.



By Sail and Steam To Vancouver

By BETTY C. KELLER

Vancouver's pioneer photographer, Harry Torkington Devine, is best known for his 1886 pictures of civic dignitaries in front of the makeshift city hall tent and of the city's landmark trees, but some of his most interesting photos are those that record the city's embryonic years as a port.

Devine's experience at sea had been confined to his emigration journey from Liverpool to Quebec City in 1882. Just seventeen at that time, he and his bookkeeper father, his mother and his twenty-year-old sister Anne had been travelling to new lives as Manitoba homesteaders, but like many of those who flocked to Manitoba in the "big boom" years, the elder Devine was a failure as a farmer and in April 1886 he moved his family to the West Coast. In the intervening years Harry T. had been apprenticed to the Brandon photographer J.A. Brock and in Vancouver the young man set up a branch office of Brock's company. By July 1886 he had bought out Brock's interest in the Vancouver operation, although he continued to operate it under Brock's name.

Devine's first ship pictures were taken within days of his arrival in the city, and they feature lumber carriers and the docks of the Hastings Mill Company from which B.C. lumber was shipped to Australia, Hawaii, Chile and China where massive building booms were in progress. Hastings Mill, owned at this point by a Canadian syndicate headed by John Hendry and managed by R.H. Alexander, was capable of turning out 65,000 board feet in a ten-hour day. (In 1889 it was remodelled and new machinery installed to raise its capacity to 150,000 board feet, surpassing the output of the Moodyville Sawmill in what is now North Vancouver, which had a capacity of 105,000 board feet.) At peak shipping periods there were as many as a hundred workmen employed on the docks and in the mill at Hastings as engineers, firemen, log-haulers, gang-sawyers, cross-cutters, filers, blacksmiths and lumber stackers. Fully one-third of these men were Chinese immigrants who had helped to build the CPR.

Four ships at a time were loaded at Hastings, two of them with their sterns to the wharf and two of them broadside to it. Mill workers stacked the lumber on the dock beside each ship, then shouldered it piece by piece to carry it aboard ship up a narrow gang-plank. The task of stowing it was still generally taken over by the ship's crew since a poorly stowed cargo could shift in rough seas and capsize the ship. Long-shoring as a separate trade was still in its infancy and it was not until the 1890s that stowing cargo became the longshoremen's exclusive prerogative.

Opposite page: The lumber ship Beaconsfield loading at Hastings sawmill, 1886 or 1887 (above). A Devine photograph of 1886 (below) shows Burrard Inlet with the barque Robert Kerr, a refuge during the great fire, at anchor off the North Shore. Behind her the tug Alexander tows the ship Duke of Abercorn out of the harbour.

Although records of the names of many of the lumber ships in Devine's pictures do not exist, the names on the bows of some are faintly discernible and the dates of the arrivals and departures from Vancouver can be checked with newspaper accounts. The barque *von Moltke*, for example, visited Vancouver many times, but Devine probably took his picture of her in late May or early June 1886. Under the command of Captain Cox, she arrived in Burrard Inlet on 22 May and anchored there for five days. At 191½ feet in length, 32 feet in width, and registered at 827 tons, she was slightly larger than the average lumber ship on the Pacific run. She had been built in Hamburg in 1870 and was owned by C.H. Donner and Company of that city.

On 27 May the *von Moltke* was towed to the north shore of the inlet and beached just east of Moodyville so that marine insurance inspectors could check her copper-plated bottom for deterioration. Five days later she was refloated by tugs and towed across the inlet to Hastings Mill to load lumber for Shanghai. She sailed on 8 June 1886, just one week before the fire that destroyed Vancouver. Five years later, on 24 May 1891, she came to grief on Australia's Great Barrier Reef while carrying lumber to Adelaide. Only the captain (by this time Captain H. Heyenge), two mates and twelve seamen survived and were taken to Sydney, arriving back home in Germany aboard the Norddeutscher Lloyd steamer *Hohenzollern* nearly two and a half months later.

The *Beaconsfield*, featured in another of Devine's pictures, was a British lumber carrier owned by Stewart Brothers of London and used primarily on the run from Vancouver to Australia. Built in Nova Scotia in 1877, she was sixteen feet longer than the *von Moltke*, nearly eight feet wider and registered at 1,503 tons. She had visited Vancouver as early as 1881, and continued to return until she was wrecked in April 1898. There are few details available concerning her fate or that of her crew, both because she was by that time owned by a Norwegian company and because of the vast numbers of shipwrecks that occurred. Among ships registered in England, there were 89 sailing ships (with a total tonnage of 6,309) wrecked in the month of March 1898 with 66 lives lost, and 10 steam ships (3,505 tons) with 10 lives lost in the same month. The month that the *Beaconsfield* went down, 77 British sailing ships and 8 steamships went to the bottom; presumably Norway and other seagoing nations lost comparable tonnage, and thus the *Beaconsfield* and her crew became just numbers in the statistical records.

One of Devine's most interesting waterfront shots blends both ship and shore life at Hastings Mill as it looked in July 1886. The foreground is centred on the seated figure of an Indian woman in a traditional woven

The arrival of the W.B. Flint out of New York, the first tea ship to drop anchor at Port Moody, 28 July 1886.
All photographs are from the Vancouver City Archives.

cedar bark hat; behind her a man pushes a wheelbarrow along the shore. On the left of the picture, the derelict hull of the steam tug *Maggie* rests on the beach. Built at Moodyville in 1873 by the pioneer logger Jeremiah Rogers, the *Maggie*, a 72-foot sidewheel tug, was the first steamer ever built on the inlet, but she lasted less than a dozen years in service. In the centre a derrick rises beside the paddle wheel tug *Mermaid* which had been launched only weeks earlier at the Hastings Mill on 22 May. On the right of the picture, the 77-ton *Evangel* loads for her return trip to Seattle with freight and passengers. The picture can be dated fairly accurately by the two-masted American schooner *Utsilady* just right of the centre of the picture; this schooner tied up on Friday 16 July with a load of hay. Since the hay is still to be seen on deck and since the *Evangel* tied up the previous day and cleared on Saturday 17 July, the picture must have been taken 16 or 17 July.

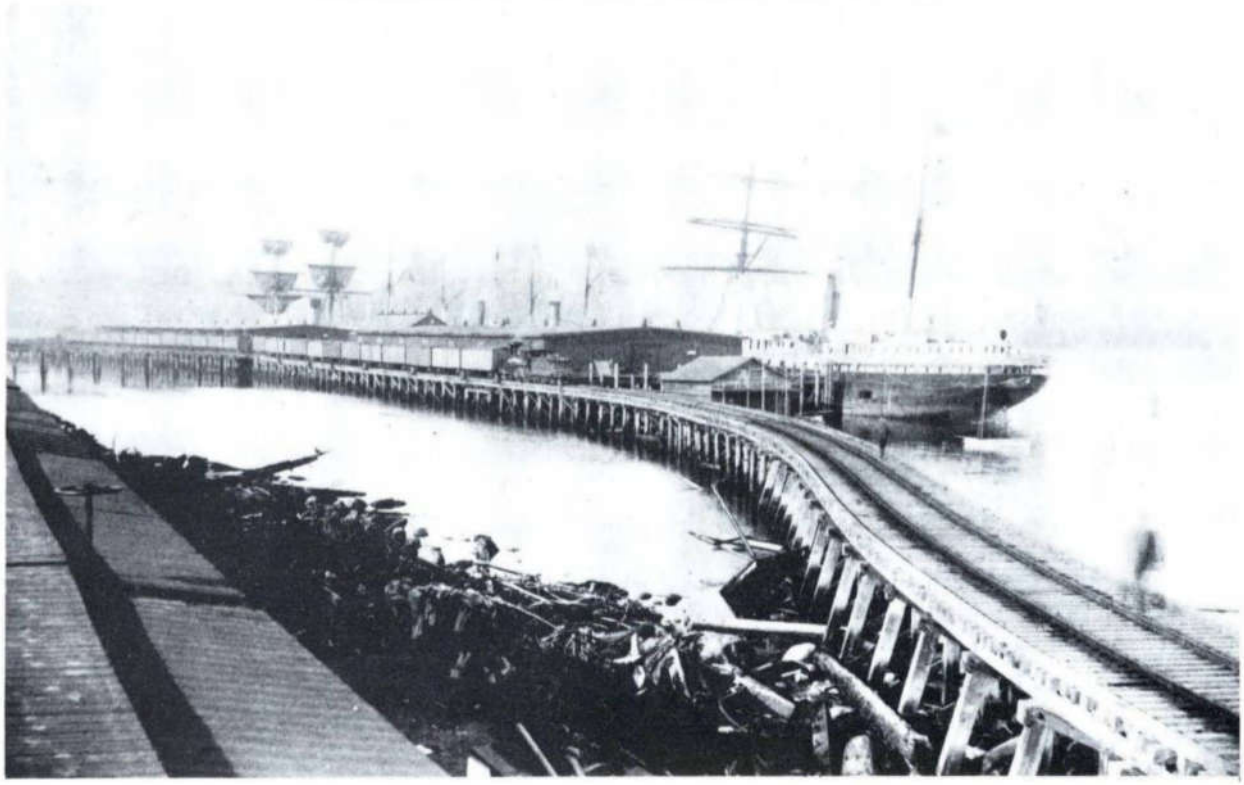
Devine gave the title "Sunset" to another of his ship and shore photographs. Taken from the beach just below St. James Church, which stood about fifty yards west of Main Street, the picture includes a small sloop and a couple of flat-bottomed skiffs in the foreground. In the distance, against a back-drop of Stanley Park, a stern-wheeler heads for the city wharf at the foot of Carrall Street.

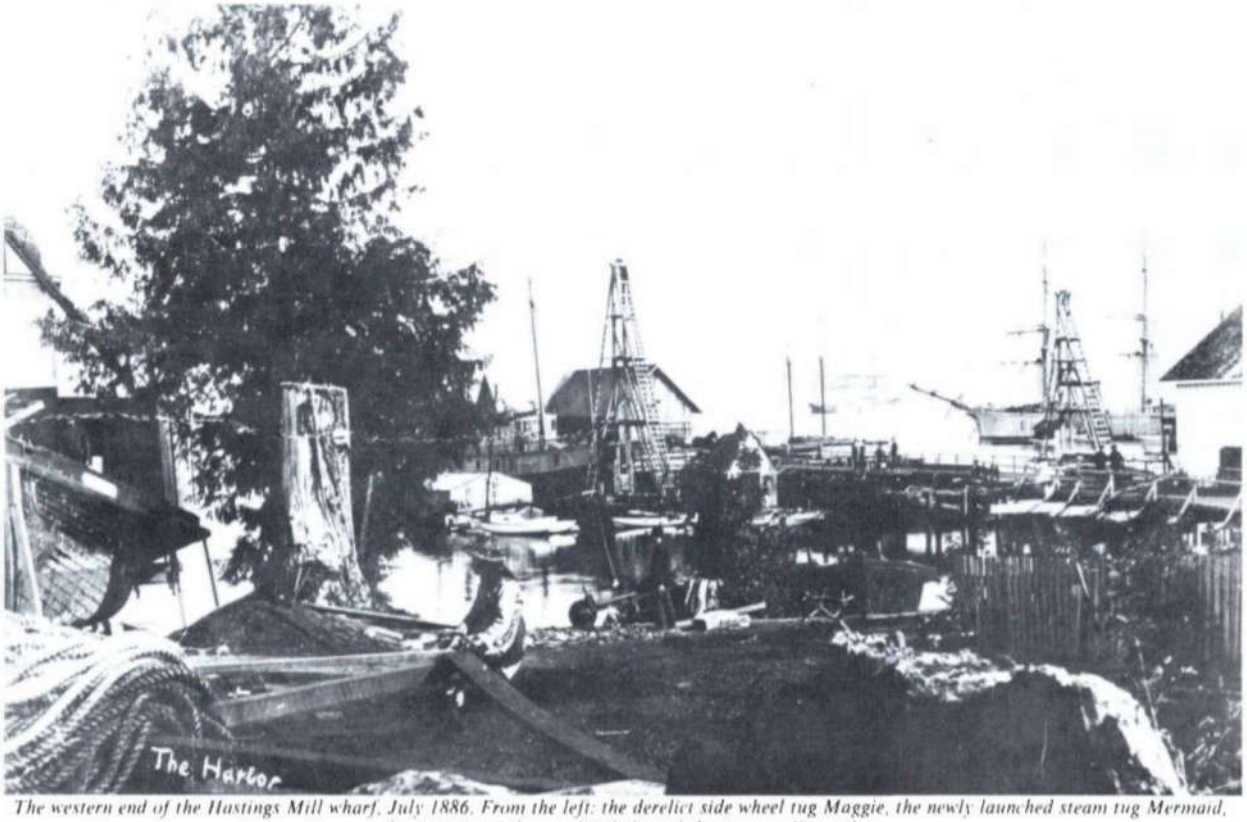
Part of Devine's job as a commercial photographer was the recording of important events much as a newspaper photographer would today, but since printing processes did not yet allow the printing of photos in the daily papers, Devine sold copies of his "commemorative photos" as postcards. Among them was a picture of the *W.B. Flint*, an American barque out of New York, docked at Port Moody to unload the first cargo of tea destined for shipment to Toronto, Hamilton, Montreal and Chicago via the CPR. The *Flint* had made the crossing from Yokohama and tied up at Port Moody on 27 July 1886.

To the people of Port Moody, the arrival of the *Flint* appeared to fulfill the promise in their settlement's name, but the CPR had other plans for a deep sea port and less than a year later, tracks had been laid along the shore of Burrard Inlet to Vancouver to service the new CPR docks. Devine's next photo of a tea ship, therefore, was taken in Vancouver. An unidentified three masted barque with pennants flying, she was tied up next to the side-wheel paddle steamer *Princess Louise*, owned by Canadian Pacific Navigation, a company formed by the amalgamation of Captain John Irving's fleet and that of the Hudson's Bay Company in 1883. The *Louise* (originally the *Olympia*) had been built in Glasgow by Tod and McGregor in 1872. She was 2,114 feet long and powered by a 200 hp engine.

Devine's photograph entitled "Sunset" showing Burrard Inlet in May 1886, looking west from the settlement.

The Port of Vancouver about 1 July 1887, a very busy day at the CPR wharf.





The western end of the Hastings Mill wharf, July 1886. From the left: the derelict side wheel tug Maggie, the newly launched steam tug Mermaid, the American schooner Utsilady and the steamer Evangel.

Devine's best known photograph of the CPR docks was taken on 23 May 1887, moments after the first CPR passenger train pulled up at the water's edge, but an equally interesting shot, taken 1 July 1887, shows the new CPR freight tracks snaking out on pilings over the inlet's shallows to the new deep-sea freight terminus. At the far left of the picture, an ocean-going combined steam and sailing ship (probably the *Parthia*, chartered by the CPR from Cunard Lines for the Yokohama-Vancouver run) dries her sails next to the Trans-Pacific freight shed. The masts of two more ships show above the sheds, and the stern of the American freighter *Umatilla* is visible beyond the Coastwise freight shed at the centre of the picture.

The three-masted barque *Robert Kerr* was included in the background of many of Devine's pictures, but a photo that he titled "The Inlet" is the only one that shows this ship clearly. Built in Quebec in 1866, 190.6 feet long and registered at 1,191 tons, the *Robert Kerr* had operated as a lumber carrier until May 1886 when she was beached just west of Moodyville for inspection. Marine insurance inspectors found sufficient teredo damage to her wooden hull to make her uninsurable and she was stricken from the Lloyd's registry. Her owner, W.R. Clarke, anchored her in the inner harbour, and there on Sunday, 13 June, she became a refuge for hundreds of people fleeing the fire which destroyed the new city. In October of that year, Clarke sold her to the first of a long line of owners who employed her as a barge, towing her between Nanaimo and Vancouver to bring coal to the CPR's locomotives and later to passenger steamships plying the Vancouver-Hong Kong-Australia route. She continued to serve in this capacity until 4 March 1911 when she struck a reef off the north end of Thetis Island. Her remains lie in 20 to 60 feet of water where they can be clearly seen on calm days.

After the fire of 13 June, Vancouverites were in no mood to celebrate their first Dominion Day as an incorporated city, but they made up for this omission the following year when the festivities were crowned with visits to the city by two of Her Majesty's battleships, the *Triumph* and the *Caroline*. Both ships were products of the British Admiralty's policy of cautious transition from wind to steam power and from wooden to iron-hulled craft. The *Triumph* was one of four 280-foot long sister ships built in 1869 and 1870 — the others were the *Iron Duke*, the *Invincible*, and the *Swiftsure*. They were constructed with four-inch armour plating laid over strategic portions of their wooden hulls and thin plating over the remainder. Their single steam engines could propel them along at 8 knots

per hour, but they were also equipped with three square rigged masts which they used for general cruising. (The *Devastation*, launched three years after the *Triumph* was the first British battleship to be built without sails.) The *Triumph* and her sisters were equipped with ten 6-inch guns, four 5-inch guns and twelve small quick-firing guns. The *Caroline* was five years older than the *Triumph* but her construction was similar.

The *Triumph* was commanded by Sir Michael Culme-Seymour, Admiral of the Royal Navy and Commander-in-Chief of the Pacific, although when he visited Vancouver on Dominion Day 1887, he was completing his final tour of duty before returning to London to be appointed to the Atlantic command. Sir William Wiseman who commanded the *Caroline* returned many times to Vancouver, on one occasion borrowing Sir William van Horne's private railway car for a visit to Banff.

Two photos in the Devine collection show the use of barges on the city's waterfront. "Bachelor's Hall" was a floathouse that was moored in False Creek at the foot of Helmcken Street (between the present Cambie and Granville bridges), an area that has since been filled in. The young men who shared this float house were all employees of the CPR. Like nearly 85% of the city's population, they were single or at least grass widowers and had to compete for the available hotel and boardinghouse rooms with a steady stream of newcomers. By late 1889 health officials reported that there were more than 250 float houses lining the shores of False Creek and Coal Harbour.

Another use for barges was illustrated by Devine's picture of the "picnic scow" or — as it was more elegantly described — the "pleasure barge". Lashed to a tug, the scow was used to transport picnic groups out through the First Narrows and across English Bay to Jericho Beach or up the North Arm for "Blackberry Picnics". This practice came to an end in June 1888 when the Presbyterian Sunday School picnickers, headed for Jericho, found themselves hard aground off Slater's Mill. When the tide dropped, they were stranded on the mud flats and had to sit in pouring rain until high tide could bring rescuers close enough.

The most famous ship in Devine's photographs is the *Beaver;* unfortunately, his photograph of her, taken in July 1888, is the last one taken of her afloat. A wooden-hulled, two masted paddle steamer, she was built in London in 1835 for the Hudson's Bay Com-

HMS Triumph and HMS Caroline at anchor side by side in Burrard Inlet, Dominion Day 1887.

A Sunday school picnic at Greer's Beach (Kitsilano), late 1880s, the old picnic scow in the background.

pany; her illustrious career on the Pacific Coast has been thoroughly documented elsewhere. By the time that Devine first saw her, her original configuration had been altered by the addition of a superstructure and wheelhouse which left more room for freight below decks, and her remaining mast, now stripped of sails, accommodated a cargo winch. She was by this time owned by E.C. Baker of Victoria and used primarily for towing log booms in the Strait of Georgia. She went aground on Prospect Point in Stanley Park on 26 July 1888, when her skipper, Captain George Marchant, attempted to turn her around to return to Vancouver for some forgotten freight. She was caught in the tricky Narrows current and driven onto the rocks. For several months attempts were made to salvage her, but although her hull was relatively undamaged, as fast as she was pumped out, high tide brought water over her bow to fill her hold again. Whatever could be salvaged from her was removed in the next few years and her remains were washed off the Point and into deep water in 1892.

Although Harry Torkington Devine loved ships, the only one he ever owned was a 26-foot clinker-built pleasure boat that he acquired sometime shortly before 1920. But it was typical of his romantic streak that the *Noreva*, as he called her, was a craft with a history. She had been a lifeboat on the *Empress of India* which he had seen sailing into Vancouver's harbour on 28 April 1891, on her first visit to the city. How Devine acquired the lifeboat is unknown, but soon afterwards he had a superstructure, capable of sleeping ten, built on her by ship's carpenter William White. She was christened by Devine's wife Emma with a combination of the names of their two eldest granddaughters, Norma and Eva. The little boat sailed the waters of Georgia Strait and the long inlets of the southern coastline for many years carrying Devine, his sons and their children. In winter she tied up in Coal Harbour until the early 1930s when she was moved to the dock of the abandoned Barnet Mill near Port Moody. Then for a few years she sat high and dry on cribbing near Devine's Burnaby home; on his death in 1938 she was sold. Her ultimate fate is unknown. ♦

Betty C. Keller lives at Sechelt, British Columbia. The pioneer photographer Harry Torkington Devine was her grandfather.

Hunting Whales In the St. Lawrence

By Randall Reeves and Edward Mitchell

In late May 1929 a load of heavy freight was delivered at the Seven Islands post of the Hudson's Bay Company. It included tanks, grapnels, and drums of gasoline. These items were earmarked for the "porpoise" fishery at Moisie, near the mouth of the St. Lawrence River. The "porpoises" to be caught were actually white whales or belugas *(Delphinapterus leucas)*. Québecois fishermen in the St. Lawrence region traditionally called these small whales (maximum size about 18 feet and 3,000 pounds) *marsouins blancs*, meaning white porpoises. Many Company employees adopted the St. Lawrence fishermen's terminology, applying the term "porpoise" to white whales wherever they were found.

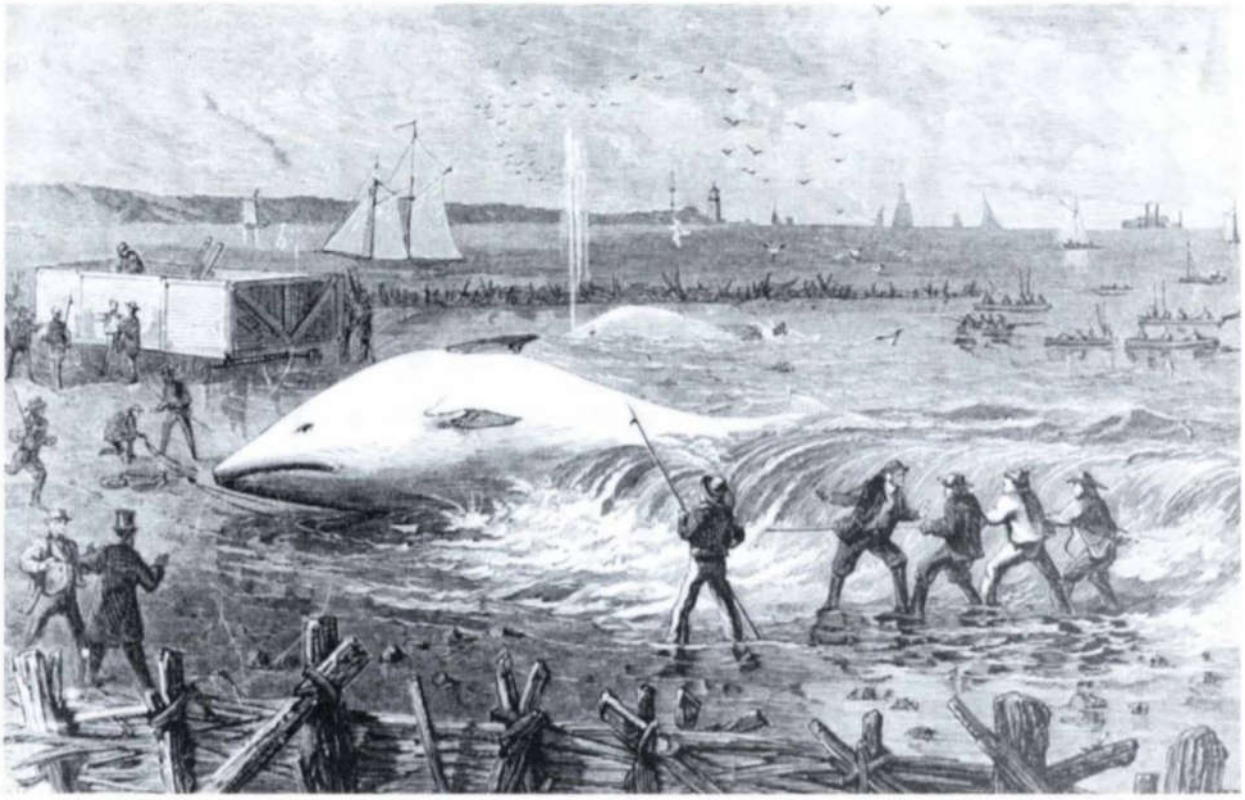
In Outfit 260 (1 June 1929 – 30 May 1930) the St. Lawrence District returned 1,398 pounds of salted porpoise hide and 315 gallons of oil. Since the average hide of a St. Lawrence beluga weighs 20-40 pounds, the quantity of hide returned that year represented something like 35 to 70 whales. How much was received in trade and how much was taken directly in the Company's nets is not clear. But we do know that two white whales were caught at Moisie on 19 July 1929, one in each of the two nets that had been set. They yielded a total of 70 gallons of oil.

It was with some reluctance that the Company had finally decided to take a direct role in the exploitation of white whales in the St. Lawrence River. There is little doubt that the decision was made, at least in part, because of the high market value of porpoise hides at the time. Also, fishermen in the St. Lawrence claimed that during 1927-1929 there had been a dramatic increase in the local white whale population. The St. Lawrence district manager wrote in July 1928 that "up to two years ago, there were very few porpoises in the Gulf of St. Lawrence but since then they have made their appearance in rather large numbers." It is unclear whether the perceived surge in the herd was caused by an influx of whales from areas outside the St. Lawrence, such as the Labrador and Greenland coasts, by a mere re-location of resident animals within the St. Lawrence system, or by some change in the fishermen's (or the Company's) interest in and awareness about the whales.

In the early 1850s George Simpson, the Company's governor in North America, had become determined to establish a porpoise fishery. The only question was where. Simpson wrote to his superiors in London in 1851:

> Propositions have been made during the two past years by several parties [in the St. Lawrence] to connect themselves with the Company in this branch of business [porpoise fishing], their view being that, the Company should provide the boats, materials, provisions &c, involving a considerable outlay, so that in the event of failure, these parties having no means of their own, the loss would, as a matter of course, have fallen on the Company.

The governor was disenchanted with the King's Posts in the St. Lawrence. As the land there became more settled and developed, the wilderness resources which supported the fur trade became less dependable. Nearly a thousand families already lived along the shores of the Saguenay River, a St. Lawrence tributary, "engaged



This fanciful illustration appeared in P.T. Barnum's autobiography. The fishermen of Ile-aux-Coudres supplied the showman with live white whales for his museum in New York. They were trapped in a "kraal", placed in boxes lined with seaweed, carried to Quebec in a sailing vessel and shipped to New York by rail.

in agriculture, lumbering, seal, salmon and porpoise fisheries." Simpson observed:

> The same species of porpoise is, at times, very numerous in the York and Moose rivers & in those on the Eastmain Coast . . . and instead of entering on this business in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, where we should be interfered with by thousands of persons endeavouring to procure a livelihood, I think we should be more likely to succeed in many parts of Hudsons Bay.

Until his death in 1860, Simpson remained committed to a Hudson Bay porpoise fishery. However, his prediction made in 1852 that "the porpoise fisheries of the Bay will be more valuable than the present beaver trade of the whole country" did prove, as he feared it might, "over-sanguine".

The St. Lawrence porpoise fishery was well-established long before George Simpson took notice of it. Jacques Cartier had reported seeing white whales in large numbers as far up the river as Ile-aux-Coudres in 1535. He called them *adhothuys*, probably a transliteration of the Montagnais name for the animals. Cartier noted that the natives killed the *adhothuys* for food, but their method of catching the whales was not described.

French colonists were catching white whales in weirs during the late seventeenth century, and by the 1720s porpoise weirs were a common feature along both the North and South shores of the St. Lawrence below Québec. We still cannot be sure whether the principle of trapping the whales in weirs originated with the settlers or was learned from the region's aboriginal inhabitants. Many types of trap were tried, some involving the use of nets and some consisting only of poles staked in the tidal flats. The configuration of a given weir seems to have depended largely on the topography and water depth of the coast as well as on the local behaviour of the whales.

Somewhere, hidden in archives, there must be records of porpoise catches made in the weirs over long series of years. However, in our own search of repositories in Québec, we found such records for only a few periods. These give some idea of the magnitude of the catch and indicate considerable variability from year to year. For example, in 1721 a total of at least 182 whales was taken in seven North Shore and two South Shore weirs. Two years later, only four whales were caught in the 15 active weirs. Very large catches occurred from time to time: 300 at La Malbaie in 1800, 300 in one day at Rivière-Ouelle, 320 in a single

tide at Ile-aux-Coudres. One author claimed that 1,800 were taken in one season at Rivière-Ouelle. Though we are skeptical of that figure, single-season catches of several hundred belugas were not unusual.

Weir fishing persisted until well into the twentieth century. At Ile-aux-Coudres 121 porpoises were caught in 1923, 60 in 1924. The last recorded catch at Rivière-Ouelle was of 129 whales in 1929. A weir was constructed at Ile-aux-Coudres in 1962 for the benefit of a film-maker wishing to document this capture technique. The weir was maintained until 1970.

In addition to the weir fishery, many St. Lawrence hunters and fishermen pursued white whales in boats, particularly along the North Shore. Roy Chapman Andrews, of the American Museum of Natural History in New York, visited Tadoussac in June 1909. The main object of his trip was to secure skeletons and plaster casts of white whales for exhibition in the museum. He arranged to go out with a party of local porpoise hunters. These men sailed in a small boat to their hunting grounds near Apple Island (Iles aux Pommes). They stalked the whales in paddle-driven canoes launched from the yawl. Whales were shot with a shotgun, then harpooned. Once the harpoon was made fast, a cedar float or buoy attached to the harpoon line was thrown overboard to help tire the wounded whale and mark its movements. The animal was dispatched with a second shot. The canoe hunters were highly selective, singling out the largest individuals they could find in a pod. According to Andrews, the clean, raw hide from an adult beluga was worth about seven dollars to the hunters at that time.

Another kind of boat fishery for belugas began near Pointe-Lebel in 1926. Motorboats were used to approach the whales, which were shot with rifles or shotguns. Although the motorboat hunt took place over shallow water, in an area called Manicouagan Bank, it was still necessary to attach a harpoon and float to a dead or seriously injured whale to ensure its retrieval. Only an exceptionally fat white whale floats when dead; most sink.

The decade of the 1930s was a bad one for the white whales of the St. Lawrence. Beginning in 1932 the *Département des Pêcheries Maritimes de Québec* paid a $15 bounty for each pair of tail flukes submitted by hunters. In six years (1932-35, 1937-38), 2,233 bounties were paid. Prices for beluga products remained strong. A trade report in the Hudson's Bay Company files, dated 1932, states that "Porpoise Hides are in good demand in London, at a price which enables us to ship profitably."

It is clear from statements in journals of Hudson's Bay Company posts along the North Shore that there was a brisk trade in beluga products during the bounty period. In 1937 at Bersimis, for example, boats arrived regularly during August through October to deliver or ship porpoise oil and hide. The company was, in fact, in heated competition for these goods. On 21 August:

> A boat arrived this morning with porpoise oil & hides and sealskin to sell. I went aboard to see them to get ahead of Gagnon, who is also buying. Sure enough, he showed up about half an hour later from the other side of the river where he is loading pulpwood, but the deal was already closed.

Thus, the beluga hunters were able to get good prices for oil and hide to supplement the bounties. Joseph Moreau arrived at Bersimis on 8 October 1937, "having finished his porpoise fishery". With the $15 bounties and the sales of oil and hide, Moreau made about $2,600 on the 84 belugas he landed that season. These figures suggest that, on average, the bounty payment doubled the value of each whale taken.

The purpose of the bounty was to reduce the population of white whales. Since at least as long ago as the 1850s, St. Lawrence fishermen had been complaining about the whales' depredations on commercial fish stocks. The *marsouins blancs* were blamed for eating or driving away everything from shoals of tiny herring and capelin to the large and individually valuable cod and salmon. The Natashquan post journal for 4 August 1937 notes:

> . . . the white 'porpoises' have chased away all fish such as cod & caplin to the extent that although different boats have been out we have not been able to procure a single fresh fish for eating for the last three weeks.

In 1864 Pierre Fortin, Canada's fishery inspector for the Gulf of St. Lawrence, had listened to the claims by fishermen in the Bay of Chaleur that the large numbers of white porpoises were "very injurious to the Salmon-fishery". Fortin expressed a healthy skepticism:

> I think we must await the experience of a few years more before committing ourselves to this opinion; we must, in the first place, have some certain facts verified, concerning the habits of these fish [i.e. the porpoises], and especially as to the nature of their food.

This sensible approach seems to have been ignored at the time.

More than 70 years passed before Dr. Vadim Vladykov, a fisheries biologist, was asked by the Québec fisheries ministry to study the relationships of white whales to commercial fish stocks in the St. Lawrence. Vladykov's work, published in 1944 and 1946, included many valuable observations of the whales' biology, behaviour, and exploitation. Judging by what was found in the stomachs of killed belugas, Vladykov concluded that much of the hearsay evidence against the whales was unfounded. The St. Lawrence white whales had

(Photo by R.C. Andrews) American Museum of Natural History

An adult white whale taken in the St. Lawrence in the summer of 1909. The tip of the flipper curls up normally in this species, a feature that becomes most pronounced in adult males.

fed mainly on capelin and sand lance. Their consumption of salmon, herring, and eels was low. Although a number of whales, particularly large males, had eaten cod, Vladykov reasoned that such predation had an insignificant effect on commercial cod landings. Changes in water temperature and salinity were, in his view, the factors most responsible for fluctuations in the availability of cod to the fishermen.

Vladykov's record of the technical and economic aspects of the beluga hunt are similarly useful. White whales in the St. Lawrence were fattest in the spring, specifically from late May to early July. The record yield of oil was from a 17-foot male taken on 6 July 1943: 135 gallons from the body alone. According to Vladykov, if the head and a few pieces of blubber that were discarded had been processed, the yield from this whale would have exceeded 150 gallons. The average yield was, of course, much less — perhaps 40 to 50 gallons.

Three different methods were used by the St. Lawrence whalers to extract the oil. The most popular method was to heat the blubber in a trypot (often made from a steel drum) directly over a fire. A major drawback was that the oil acquired a dark colour and lost some of its value. Many of the hunters on the North Shore preferred to place their blubber in a metal container exposed to the sun, letting the oil separate slowly. This procedure resulted in an oil with a very high fatty acid content and many impurities. Its foul odour made it unpopular with some buyers.

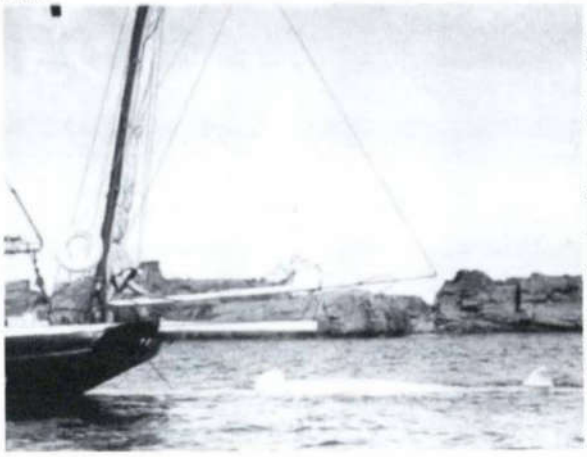
The Lizotte brothers of Rivière-Ouelle, who were the last beluga weir fishermen on the South Shore, used a method of extraction that gave a practically colourless, odourless oil. It involved the immersion of the blubber in a water bath. The Lizotte brothers' facilities allowed them to process only a few whales a day using this procedure, however, and any delay in extracting the oil lowers its quality by increasing the content of free fatty acids. The William F. Nye company in New Bedford, Massachusetts, a major buyer of lubricating oil for fine machinery, advised Vladykov that oil from Rivière-Ouelle was well known for having a high content of free fatty acids, making it relatively unattractive as a lubricant.

Head oil, used to lubricate precision instruments like watches and typewriters, generally was worth more than body oil. Beluga oil, often mixed with seal oil, was also used for tanning and in the manufacture of soap, margarine, and paint. It is a good rust preventative and often was applied for this purpose to guns, knives, and tools.

Porpoise leather has many desirable properties. Because the skin on the bodies of belugas (and other cetaceans) has no hair or glands, and therefore no pores, the finished leather has no grain. It acquires a superb gloss when polished. Also, according to Thomas Pennant, writing in 1784, it is "strong enough to resist a musquetball". Vladykov re-told the story of an Escoumins shoemaker's father who wore a pair of shoes made of beluga leather for 14 years. The soles needed to be replaced several times, but the uppers remained in good shape. One gentleman from Ile-aux-Coudres was said, again by Vladykov, to have used a beluga razor strop for more than 30 years. Beluga leather is noted for its flexibility. Everything from jackets and breeches to carriage covers and handbags have been fashioned from it. When split (up to four thin layers could be gotten from some hides) this leather makes attractive luggage. Perhaps the best known and most widespread use of porpoise leather was for making shoe and boot laces. Such laces were especially popular in outdoor footwear.

According to Vladykov, green (unsalted) porpoise hides were graded in Québec according to the amount of damage sustained during killing and skinning. An

A sailboat with a white whale in tow in harbour near Tadoussac, June 1909.



(Photo by R.C. Andrews) American Museum of Natural History

A-hide had one bullet hole; a B-hide three or four bullet holes or a similar number of knife cuts; and a C-hide five or six bullet holes or several knife cuts. The treatment of hides was all-important in determining their value.

Very precise instructions were sent from the London Hudson's Bay Company office to the District Manager for the St. Lawrence/Labrador District in 1926, following consultations with "the leading Porpoise or White Whale Tanner in the United Kingdom":

> In taking off the cork it is essential that the grain or the surface of the skin itself should not be scratched or cut in that this tends to weaken the strength of the hide.
>
> Furthermore, it is very essential that the hide should be put into salt as quickly as possible and sufficient salt to ensure effective curing.
>
> Some of the hides sent forward this year are useless for tanning in that putrefaction is so great as to have made the skins absolutely rotten.

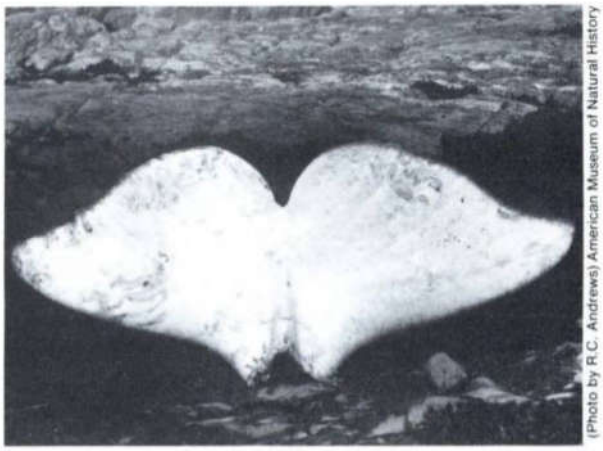
If a hide was not salted sufficiently during the curing period or if decomposition took place before curing was effected, the hide's value was badly compromised. "These hides are worthless in that the tainted portion when put into tanning material breaks and large holes are made. Moreover, the leather itself has no breaking strain."

Entries in post journals occasionally point up problems with the quality of hides delivered by the hunters. The trader at Bersimis tried to telephone Theophile Jean, a porpoise hunter, on 22 September 1934, "with a view to ascertaining what allowance he is prepared to make for the wormy porpoise hides shipped". When two hunters arrived at the post in October 1937 with oil and hides to trade, the manager was able to settle with them for the oil but "was obliged to refuse the porpoise hides they had to offer". It is not made clear in the post journal whether the hunters held out for a higher price than was offered or in fact the hides were too badly damaged for marketing.

Vladykov likened beluga meat to venison or calves' liver. He reported that St. Lawrence fishermen ate the meat of both the white whale and the habor porpoise *(Phocoena phocoena)*. The latter is a small, dark-coloured porpoise common in some parts of the river and gulf. Although the gustatory and nutritional qualities of white whale parts were not of particular concern to the Hudson's Bay Company, Simpson once wrote:

> It appears the flesh, tongue, liver, fins & tail of the porpoise are . . . a grateful & nutritious food — the tongue said to resemble that of the reindeer, while the flesh is described as being very like sturgeon & the tail & fins like tripe.

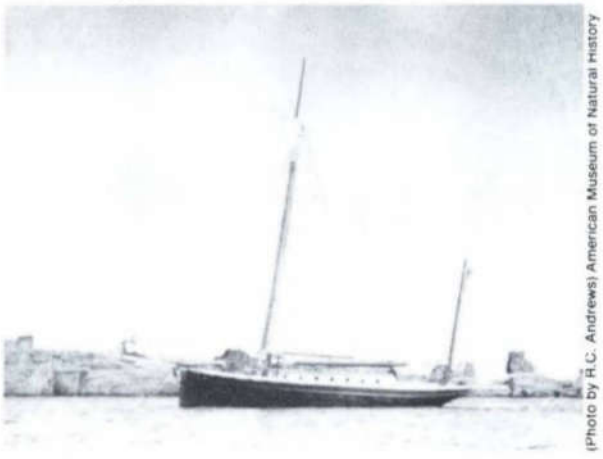
Recent censuses of the white whale population in the St. Lawrence, by both private and government researchers, have shown that the stock numbers only about 500 animals. Our own reconstruction of the history of white whale exploitation in the St. Lawrence demonstrated that there were at least 5,000 whales in 1885, as it would have required that many to sustain the documented catch in subsequent years. It also appears that the summer range of belugas in the river has shrunk. They now occupy consistently during that season no more than a 60-mile stretch of the St. Lawrence and lower Saguenay rivers. Whereas during Vladykov's time there was a large concentration of white whales between the Manicouagan and Bersimis rivers from May to October, few are seen there today. The Bersimis River was dammed in the 1950s; the Manicouagan and Outardes rivers, in the early 1960s. Local residents and some scientists are convinced that the damming is at least indirectly responsible for excluding the whales from this formerly significant portion of their summer range. The mechanism for such exclusion is not well understood, though it could



(Photo by R.C. Andrews) American Museum of Natural History

The tail flukes of a white whale killed in the St. Lawrence River near Tadoussac, June 1909

A sailboat at anchor near Tadoussac, June 1909. This vessel and others like it were used to carry "porpoise" hunters and their canoes to the hunting grounds.



(Photo by R.C. Andrews) American Museum of Natural History

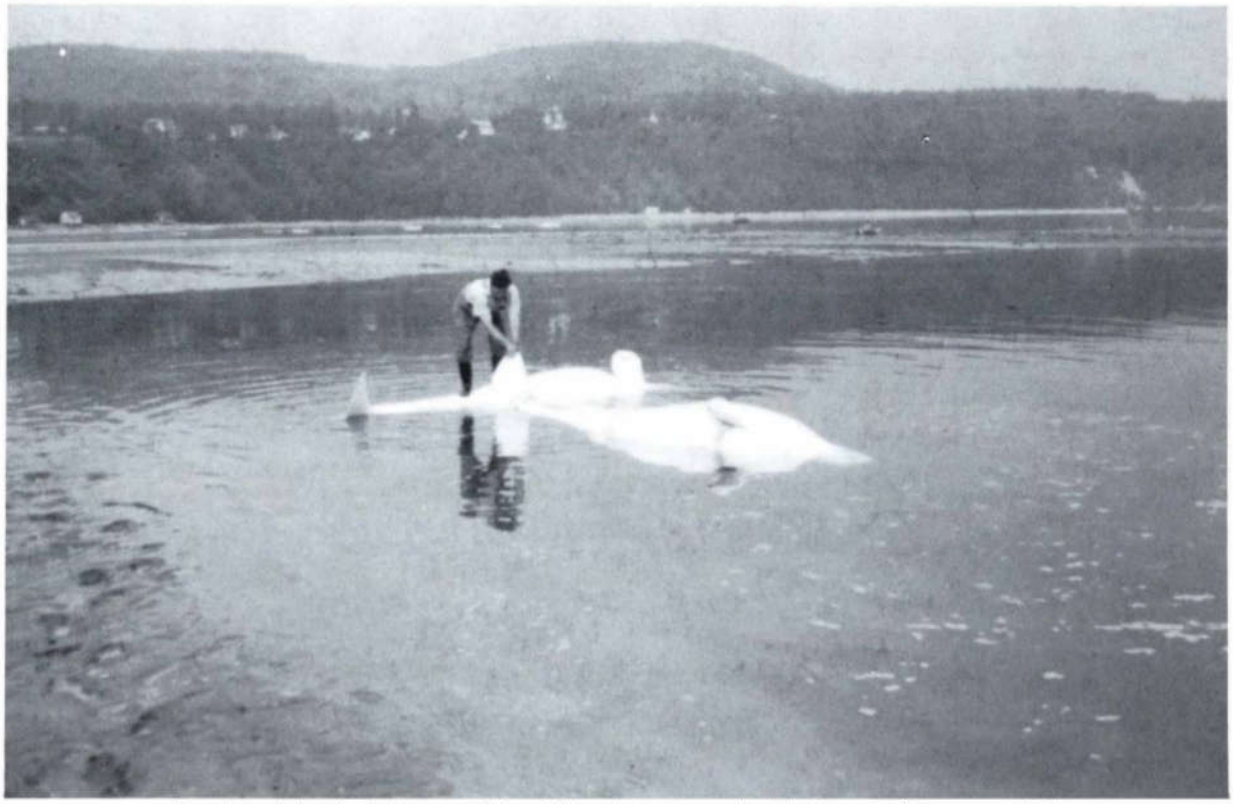


Photo by H.D. Morrison

Two white whales shot by "sportsmen" from Chicoutimi at the mouth of the Saguenay River, summer 1962. The animals were towed to the hotel beach at Tadoussac and left to rot.

relate to changes in the water temperatures of the estuaries, to reduced local abundance of prey species, or to a combination of these and other factors.

Though the bounty was removed in 1939, white whales continued to be taken in the St. Lawrence for their hides and oil during and after the Second World War. It is very likely that hunting was a principal cause of the stock's decline. However, by all accounts the commercial hunt for St. Lawrence belugas had become unprofitable and was essentially over by the 1960s, at the least. The federal government extended complete protection to white whales in the St. Lawrence and Saguenay rivers in 1979, but in spite of some research on the stock, no upward trend in the population's size has been detected. Why has there been no evident recovery?

In searching for explanations, David Sergeant of the Arctic Biological Station has estimated the annual production of calves and compared it to presumably "healthy" Arctic populations of white whales. According to his results, the St. Lawrence population does seem to be less productive than its Arctic counterparts, with a birth rate of only about eight or nine percent compared to their 12 to 14 percent. An effort has been made to salvage and dissect carcasses of belugas found floating or beached in the St. Lawrence over the last few years. These have confirmed that the whales are carrying very heavy loads of environmental contaminants, especially PCBs. Ship and boat traffic is much more significant in the St. Lawrence than in most of the Arctic estuaries which are still used by large numbers of white whales. Expansion of the marina at Tadoussac has resulted in more motorboat traffic there, and the belugas that once attracted tourists to this picturesque bay have now abandoned it.

While there is no consensus about which factors are most responsible, everyone seems to agree that the St. Lawrence stock of belugas is in a precarious state and that the reasons are not simple. This group of white whales is the most southerly distributed and most accessible in the world. It has played an important role in the social and economic history of several North and South Shore communities. Its potential for supporting tourism and scientific research has only begun to be realized. We hope that the kind of studies necessary to determine what's wrong will be conducted soon, and that the requisite actions to promote the whale population's recovery will be taken before it is too late. ♦

Randall Reeves is a research associate and Edward Mitchell a research scientist at the Arctic Biological Station, Federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Ste. Anne de Bellevue, Quebec.

A PASSAGE TO KINGSTON

The ordeal of travel in pioneer Canada

BY WALTER LEWIS

Public Archives of Canada C-1512, C-19353

Top of page 41: A view of Cataraqui, 1784, by James Peachey. Above: Durham boats ascending the St. Lawrence by E.S. Shrapnel.

Today, most travellers approaching Kingston from Montreal do so on Highway 401. Three hours in an automobile doing 100 km/h and the journey is finished. Along the way the occupants can enjoy music, stop at a restaurant, and perhaps even enjoy air conditioning in the heat of the summer. Any hint of such luxury had been left miles behind by the Loyalists and those who followed them to the frontiers of Upper Canada.

An exhausting, tedious journey faced these immigrants as they set off up the St. Lawrence above Montreal, the principal route into the frontier province. Until drowned by the Seaway in the 1950s, a series of rapids proved a formidable set of obstacles. Successive generations struggled up them and built portage roads, canals and railways in order to avoid them. For many of these immigrants the trek up the rapids of the St. Lawrence provided a harsh initiation into the realities of pioneer life.

For the Loyalists this journey was particularly arduous. It began in the spring of 1784 as most of the Loyalists in Quebec were transported to the tiny outpost of Lachine, nine miles upriver from Montreal. From there they were to be conveyed upstream in bateaux. A scant ten or twelve paces long and two wide, these craft resembled nothing so much as oversized, planked canoes. If filled to capacity with over four tons of freight or about twenty people, there remained barely enough room for the usual crew of four oarsmen and the helmsman to take their places. But on this expedition, however, the regular French-Canadian crews were largely replaced by the Loyalists working their passage. And work they would, except that when half a breeze drifted up, they could drop their oars, step a short mast and hoist a sail. An inspiration that sail was, except that the prevailing winds blew from the wrong direction. Consequently the trip upstream took ten or twelve days on average, while the return journey, accomplished with the aid of both current and breeze, took only one third that time.

Ten days was what that first brigade of Loyalist settlers spent on the river in the late spring of 1784, their passage expedited somewhat by the four small military canals already established between Lake St. Louis and Lake St. Francis.

Above these canals, however, there was no avoiding the rapids. And portaging these cumbersome craft was out of the question. As one young Loyalist, Adiel Sherwood, later recalled:

> When a rapid was ascended, part of the boats were left . . . in charge of one man, the remaining boats being doubly manned, and drawn up by means of a rope fastened to the bow, leaving four men in the boat with setting-poles to assist. The men at the end of the rope walked along the bank but were frequently compelled to wade in the current upon the jagged rocks. On reaching the head of the Rapid, one man was left in charge and the boatmen returned for the balance of the brigade.

Able bodied males, almost without respect for rank and station, were expected to join the boatmen in this exercise, emerging soaked to the skin to take their place at the oars once more.

At nightfall, the brigade of boats would be drawn up on the shore or an island. Fires were lit, tents rigged out of the sails, pipes drawn and a final meal consumed. By 4:00 a.m. the camp would begin to stir again and in the soft, pre-dawn light, the mist still clinging to the river's banks, the bateaux would slip back into the water.

On the tenth day, the Loyalist brigade rounded the last point and gazed for the first time on Cataraqui. Kingston, as the settlement would soon be known, was still a rather unprepossessing sight; a small cluster of buildings, a few wooden wharves and some military structures nestled inside the crumbling walls of Fort Frontenac.

Nevertheless, this harbour, strategically sited at the foot of Lake Ontario, would remain the upper terminus of the bateaux and their larger cousins, the rectangular Durham boats. Even after the arrival of the steamboat many of these boats were towed up to Kingston to exchange their cargoes with the schooners there. But because only a few boatmen were needed for this final stage, many of the crew transferred to downward bound boats at Prescott, where the principal freight forwarding firms became established.

The introduction of steam navigation, less than 35 years after the arrival of the Loyalists, signaled the first major improvement in the passage upriver. For some travellers little would change. Unlike the Loyalists, few were compelled, unless by poverty, to work their passage. The men, however, were still expected to leap into the cold rushing water to help manhandle their heavily laden craft up the rapids.

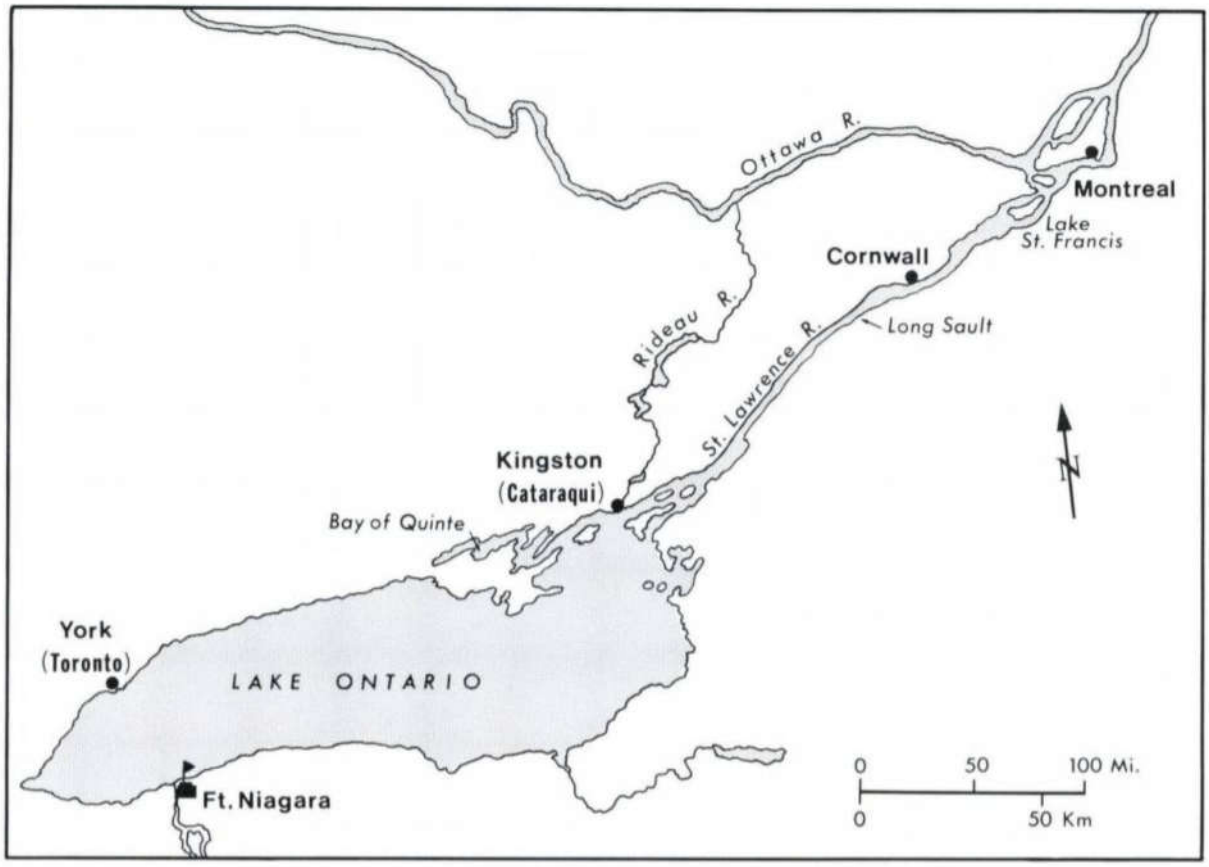
Two alternatives remained. The poor could get out and walk if they had very little luggage or were prepared to pay its freight. At least one immigrant, Sam Strickland, started off in the boats and left them by the first set of rapids. He had found the crew "a rough set of customers", which was not an unexpected conclusion about a group of working men who were reputed to extract a toll from every container of liquor they hauled upriver. Strickland then decided to hike the eighty miles to Prescott, where he was forced to kick his heels for two or three days until his luggage caught up with him.

For other passengers including businessmen, travelers and immigrants with some capital, the passage could be both much faster and relatively more pleasant. However, the journey still had its inconveniences, starting with the 4:00 a.m. departure from their Montreal hotel. Their stage coaches, courtesy of Horace Dickenson's Upper Canada Stage Coach and Steam Boat Line, seated nine passengers. They could, if the fancy took them, draw back the canvas curtains at the sides and have an unobstructed view of the sleeping city as they made their way out the western turnpike to Lachine.

Shortly after daybreak those who had paid for Dickenson's hospitality found themselves trundling through

James Peachey, Encampment of the Loyalists at Johnstown (later Cornwall), 1784.

Public Archives of Canada C-2001



Lachine to a long wooden wharf where both the Ottawa and St. Lawrence steamers lay ready. The passengers would cross narrow, unrailed gangplanks and the two steamers would cast off. Tagging along behind would be several bateaux and Durham boats at the end of long tow ropes, but the hungry passengers rarely paid much attention to those as they crowded into the cramped cabin for breakfast.

This pattern repeated itself throughout that day. After a morning in the noisy, crowded little steamer, it put in at the Cascades, a tiny French Canadian village at the foot of the first series of rapids above Lachine. The Durham boats with their freight and passengers struck off for the boat canal. There, even though the canals had been enlarged, they frequently had to be half unloaded to float through the shallow locks. "Through" passengers and their baggage were conducted to the company stages, which then careened off up the road to Coteau du Lac. There another side-wheeler was waiting with steam up. As soon as all were aboard, it pushed off and took up its tow lines. Within a few minutes dinner would be served. Unless disturbed by stormy winds, several uneventful hours would pass until this second steamer drew alongside its dock at Cornwall. There yet another relay of coaches stood waiting.

Until late 1832, what followed was a wild overnight stage coach ride, which left the more literate struggling with analogies from Dante's *Inferno*. For fifty miles, the coach reeled and pitched over what some travellers nominated as the worst road in North America. When finally threatened by competition from the Rideau waterway, Dickenson commissioned the *Iroquois*, a steamboat barely powerful enough to climb from Dickenson's Landing (as the community at the head of the Long Sault came to be called) up several shallow rapids to Prescott. There one of the big lake steamers would gather up the immigrants, travellers and upbound freight and deliver them within the next day or two to Kingston and ports further west.

By mid-century the St. Lawrence route was completely transformed. Spurred by the success of the Rideau canal which had bypassed the upper St. Lawrence, work was begun on a canal at the Long Sault, large enough to accommodate the lake steamers. The outbreak of rebellion delayed the river improvements until they were finally absorbed into the new St. Law-

Public Archives of Canada C-40334

Long Sault Rapids on the St. Lawrence River, Canada West 1849.

rence canals as part of the deal sweetening the union of the two Canadas.

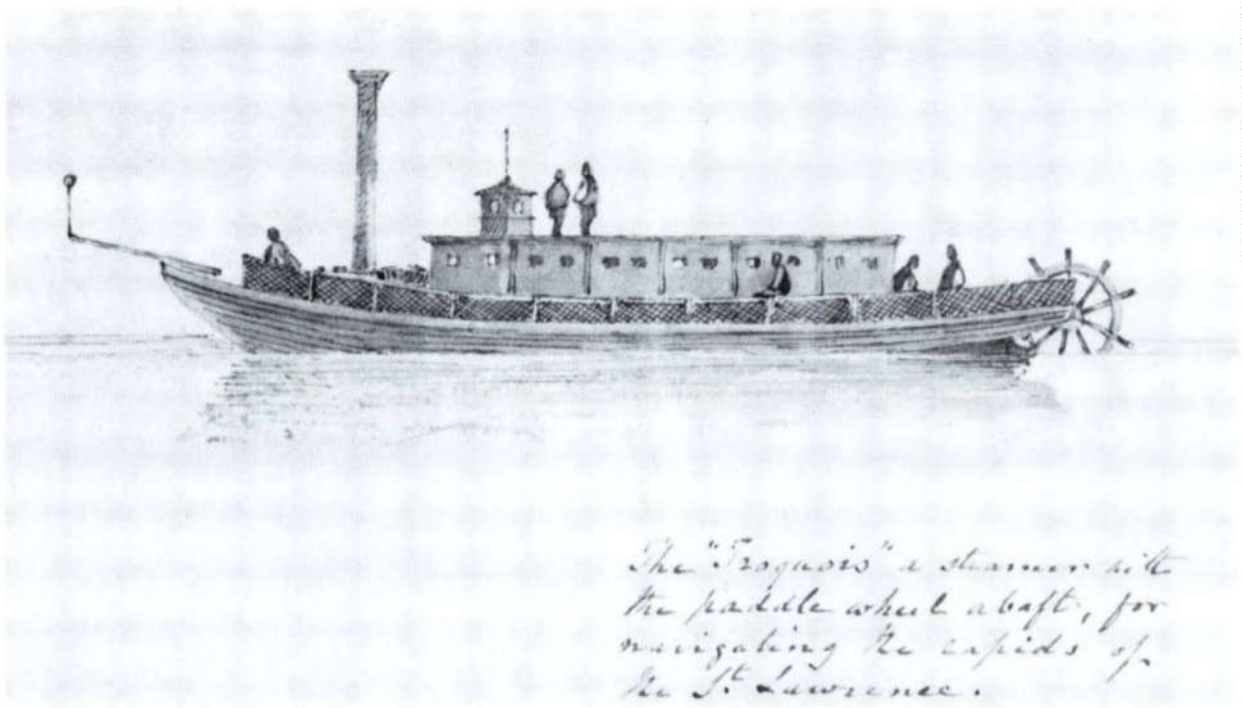
Designed to accommodate the largest Canadian vessels then on Lake Ontario, the new canals eclipsed the Rideau. With the enlargement of the Lachine Canal, the final obstacle was removed and the Royal Mail Line boats ran the Lachine rapids to their new berths in Montreal harbour.

Dwarfing the tiny river steamers of Dickenson's generation these palatial new vessels were designed to take maximum advantage of the new St. Lawrence docks. The broad promenade deck now held the first class cabins which had formerly been down in the hull beside the engine. The shift left larger holds for the package freight, the tons of wood consumed by a 100 h.p. low pressure steam engine and the deck passengers whose "no frills" fare entitled them to a space on the deck to put their belongings and to stretch out on to sleep at night. But on the upper levels, for those who could afford them, the boats had begun to feature a revolutionary new concept — private staterooms where couples could spend the night together in privacy. Previously first class passengers had been segregated in Gentlemen's and Ladies' Cabins unless they had only paid second class or deck fare.

In the 23 hours of passage those aboard were disturbed only by meal calls. Isolated from the deck passengers, those in the upper saloon were free to play the piano, drink or gather in small groups on the comfortable sofas and chairs indoors and on the promenade deck. As the vessel climbed step by step past nature's barriers, the passengers were able to catch a glimpse of other steam vessels, barges and huge rafts of lumber running the rapids. As well, the steamboat delivered the mail (to six dozen post offices, according to one disgruntled source) and continually replenished her wood supply at the same small village wharves.

The Kingston that greeted the immigrant at mid-century was a cacophony of sights, sounds and smells. Wooden and stone wharves thrust from the shore around the modern military defences of the port. Topped with offices, warehouses, passenger shelters, some even boasted a tavern. Rope, boxes and barrels of freight, and cord upon cord of wood were piled everywhere. Teams of labourers sweated and swore as they shovelled grain out of lake schooners from ports on the upper lakes.

As the Royal Mail Line vessels drew up to the wharf they were descended upon by those meeting passengers and others looking for casual work or a little excite-



Public Archives of Canada C-115050

The Iroquois, a steamer with the paddle wheel abaft for navigating the rapids of the St. Lawrence, sepia over pencil by Henry Byam Martin, nineteenth century.

ment. "Runners" for the various connecting steamers and local hotels schemed and lied as they courted the patronage of the disembarking passengers.

All this attention would be confined to the steamboat lines for only a few years. Promoters of the Grand Trunk Railway, whose trains were to operate year round without any transfers between Montreal and Toronto, arrogantly expected to capture the entire trade of the St. Lawrence valley, both passenger and freight. While its management made some rather inept decisions in its early years, the railways would gradually take control of all but the summer excursion passenger traffic and a proportion of the freight trades.

The train waiting at the Point St. Charles station, a mile and a half from the Montreal harbourfront was American in design, despite the line's English contractors and financiers. The cars were longer than those in Britain and rather than being sub-divided were composed of a single compartment. The company did, however, provide First Class cars, which were distinguished from the second or Immigrant Class cars by a variety of small amenities such as having a "washing-room" rather than a tub of drinking water. During the summer months the passengers in both classes were faced with the dilemma of opening the windows and risking the ash and embers from the wood-burning locomotives or leaving them closed and stifling from the heat, the ubiquitous cigar smoke and the dust. The competing steamboats even had the gall to boldly challenge travellers to compare a night's sleep on the waves of Lake Ontario with several hours shaking and rattling on the Grand Trunk. Still, if the train was on schedule this ordeal would last only 14 hours until it reached Toronto, three times faster than the through steamers working on their accelerated schedules.

Of these dramatic improvements in the speed and comfort of transportation the first generations of settlers were very conscious. Indeed, Adiel Sherwood, a young boy during the Loyalist migration, had plenty of opportunity to "ride the rails" before his death in 1874. ♦

Walter Lewis of Georgetown, Ontario, has written extensively on the history of the Great Lakes area.

THE 'MAHDI' OF WESTERN CANADA?

Louis Riel and His Papers

BY J.M. BUMSTED

Canada has not often executed traitors, and probably the only instance most Canadians could conjure up if asked about the matter is that of Louis Riel, hanged for high treason in Regina on 16 November 1885. That Riel is the nation's most famous traitor is only the tip of the iceberg of ironies surrounding his life and death. For "traitor" Riel was a duly naturalized American citizen, leader of a transnational group of people, the Métis, and perhaps insane at the time of the commitment of his acts of treachery. In keeping with the complexity that was Riel, he vehemently denied insanity, although acceptance of such a defence might well have saved his life.

The overriding irony, of course, is that in the years since his death Riel has become a major hero for large numbers of Canadians, a legendary larger-than-life figure who looms far more significantly over western Canadian history for the facts of his death. If the Canadian government hoped through exacting the ultimate penalty for his actions to put paid to his crusade, it failed miserably. For not only is Riel one of our few mythic heroes, he is the only major Canadian whose papers have been collected and published with the full panoply of scholarly apparatus developed for figures like Thomas Jefferson, George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, and John Adams. And given the shutdown of the granting programme under which the Riel Papers were funded, they are likely to stand in unique splendour for many years to come.

Canada has generally always lagged badly behind other nations in terms of the publication of the documentary sources of its history. We have had nothing comparable with the collected editions of papers of individuals and institutions produced in Great Britain, France, and the United States in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Governments have produced regular collections of sessional papers, the Public Archives of Canada published some documents — mainly between 1880 and 1920 — and various private ventures such as the Champlain Society, the Hudson's Bay Record Society (now defunct although revived in another guise), and the Manitoba Record Society have soldiered on despite largely indifferent public support. But the recent trend, particularly in the United States, to produce accurate scholarly editions of the papers of major American leaders, chiefly from the ranks of the so-called "founding fathers", very nearly passed Canada by. The Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada did get involved in large-scale editorial projects in the early 1970s, funding such ventures as the Disraeli Papers, the John Stuart Mill Papers, and the Erasmus Papers. Louis Riel was its first — and last — experiment with a Canadian figure, at least on the scale of major funding.

At first glance Louis Riel does not appear to be a likely candidate for such loving, painstaking, and expensive academic treatment. He was, after all, a rebel executed for treason. But it must be remembered that many of the American figures given similar treatment were also rebels. The difference was that they were successful, although men like Franklin certainly appreciated that failure would probably be followed by the rope. It must also be kept in mind that Riel's execution was a highly political act by the Canadian government, one which not only ignored his mental state but the recommendation of the jury that had convicted him. That jury, while agreeing easily that he was guilty as charged, also recommended mercy, on the grounds that the inadequacies of government policy for the North West Territories constituted mitigating circumstances. Moreover, given the waves of controversy that have surrounded Riel since his first appearance in the public spotlight at the head of the

LOUIS RIEL
The Collected Writings/Les Ecrits complets

George F. G. Stanley, General Editor. University of Alberta Press, Edmonton, 1985. In five volumes, $250.00.

Red River Resistance of 1869-70, given the academic disputes to which his career has given rise, and particularly given his appropriation for the mythology of all sorts of elements of Canadian society, ranging from French-Canadian Catholic Nationalism to Native Rights to Canadian New Left student movements, the full publication of his writings offers a natural opening to "set the record straight". Whether there should be consonance between the Riel of the papers and the Louis Riel whose name was invoked by radical students at Simon Fraser University to rename a residence financed by private capitalism (and initially called "Shell House") is another matter entirely. Riel is clearly a complicated personality whose actions and thoughts have struck many different and even divergent resonances, and the publication of his papers probably creates as many problems as it resolves. Many factors contribute to the continuing confusion unresolved by the papers.

In the first place, Riel appears to have lacked whatever instinct leads human beings to generate and save their writings for posterity and the historical record. To some extent, the oral tradition of the people he was leading probably militated against the production of very much day-to-day written material. To some extent, the fact that he was only briefly a man of action, and in both cases leading movements lacking the institutional legitimacy that the American rebels were able to bring to their struggle with the British, contributed to a paucity of papers for the critical periods of activity. Riel was not an unlettered man, and he was to some extent a man of letters, a point brought home by an entire volume of the published papers devoted to his poetry. But he was also a man of a mystical bent, who doubtless felt that the hundreds of pages describing his various visions and visitations were as important as the keeping of a daily diary. Indeed, when he did keep such a diary, as at Batoche in 1885, it is filled with visions rather more than the ordinary activities of a rebel commander in the field. In short, we learn little of the prosaic details of his life from Riel's writings and correspondence. He lacked the eye for the ordinary of a Pepys or a Boswell, and even his letters to his family are singularly unrewarding in this respect.

What the Riel papers document best are Riel's peculiar abnormalities, especially what his contemporary William James labelled for other religious visionaries the "sick soul", the inner emotional turmoil of the spiritual quest for truth and certainty, and the enormous difficulties of exile that Riel faced. The problems of Louis Riel as political refugee are a major point in these documents, one that has not received much attention from most scholars, who have concentrated on Riel's periods of political activity and have seen the intervening years often in terms of the manoeuvering in Ottawa and Manitoba among the various

contending parties. While the manoeuvering went on, however, Louis Riel lived in exile.

One of our leading authorities on Riel has written, "Louis Riel was not a great man; he was not even what Carlyle would call a near great." (G.F.G. Stanley, *Louis Riel: Patriot or Rebel?* Ottawa, CHA, 1954, p. 24). Whether George Stanley, who served as editor-in-chief of the Riel Papers project, would now change that verdict is not clear from his own editorial comments in the volumes; he does not directly confront his own earlier judgment. But Riel was certainly a complex man, whose life was shaped and even warped by circumstances beyond his control. In the last analysis, there is a tragic greatness to Louis Riel, and the careful reader of his collected surviving testament cannot help but be struck by the ways in which *Dame Fortuna* conspired continually against him. While he may be, as Stanley put it in 1954, "a sad, pathetic, unstable man, who led his followers in a suicidal crusade and whose brief glory rests upon a distortion of history,"

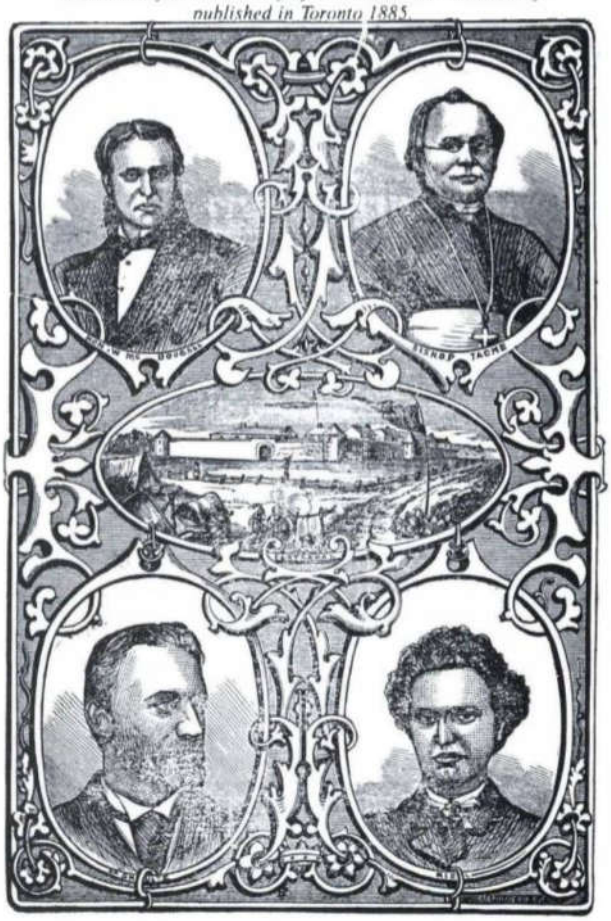
he was also the classic rebel visionary who became the classic victim of a government and society he wanted less to overthrow than, along with his Métis people, to join. First they exiled him, then they executed him.

In any individual's life there are certain key turning points. For Louis Riel there can be no doubt that the event dominating the subsequent unfolding of his life occurred in early March 1870, when he ordered the execution of Thomas Scott. The Riel papers contain virtually no material for the period of his leadership of the Red River Uprising, and so it is hardly surprising that there is no contemporary documentation for this controversial action. From Riel's subsequent justifications and explanations, as well as from the testimony of some of his collaborators, a story of sorts emerges. Scott was part of an armed band of opponents to Riel's provisional government captured at Portage la Prairie in February 1870. The party's leader, Major Charles Boulton, was condemned to death by a Métis court martial, but his life was spared through Donald Smith's intervention. In captivity Scott was surly and unruly, probably provocatively insulting to the Métis. He was charged with insubordination before another court martial, convicted, and executed the following day under Riel's orders by a firing squad. Riel never attempted to evade his personal responsibility for the execution by arguing that his followers had insisted upon it; his constantly reiterated argument was that the situation demanded such action, to make his government respected and to prevent others from challenging it. The summary nature of the deed suggests that Riel did not long agonize over the decision, and certainly did not appreciate its larger potential significance.

Up to the point of the Scott execution, Riel's leadership of the Métis Uprising had been masterful. Whether or not he was the principal strategist behind the series of moves that had resulted in the negotiations with Canada occurring at the very moment of Scott's death is impossible to determine, nor is it relevant. As the head of the armed Métis he could have thwarted the plans of others, and even if he did not initiate, he carried them out. He was probably not fully aware of the deep embarrassment that the uprising was causing the Canadian government simply by exposing the lack of foresight shown in its own behaviour in annexing the West without informing, much less consulting, with its inhabitants. He certainly could not appreciate that the execution of the Orangeman Thomas Scott would serve as the catalyst for turning Ontario's attention to the West and reacting against the Métis. As Canada Firster George Denison would later recall, until news of the death of a "loyal Ontario man, an Orangeman" reached the east, "it had been found difficult to excite any interest in Ontario in the fact that a number of Canadians had been thrown into prison." But "by denouncing the murder of Scott," it was "possible to arouse the indignation of the people, and foment a public opinion that would force the Government to send up an armed expedition to restore order." (George T. Denison, *The Struggle for Imperial Unity, Recollections & Experiences* Toronto, 1909).

While Riel can be excused for his failure to appreciate the uses to which Scott's execution (his "murder," as Riel's opponents always put it) could be put, a bit of reflection might have led him to appreciate that the action was out of keeping with the overall image of legitimacy that the provisional government was generally and successfully maintaining. Riel himself would be "murdered" by the Canadian authorities in 1885. Interesting enough, if John A. Macdonald had his way, Riel's case would not have been carried through the full judicial appeal process possible under the British North America Act, but he was overruled by his governor-general. But Riel's own execution, however political in its way, was legitimized by the Canadian and imperial judicial system, while that of Scott was carried out by a firing squad based upon a decision by an *ad hoc* tribunal. Even in 1870 there was a dif-

Illustration from The Story of Louis Riel The Rebel Chief, published in Toronto 1885.



Father Fabien Barnabé of St. John's Church, Keeseville, N.Y., Riel's host in exile.

ference between Riel's suppression of opposition through force, in which people might lose their lives in armed resistance, and summary executions of prisoners, however much such action was part of the Métis tradition. Indeed, such tradition was part of the Canadian case against the Métis, and having taken such great pains to establish legitimate authority in his provisional government, it behooved Riel not to undermine the position through an action which nobody could defend as legal, however justified it might be.

No political organization has ever appreciated being forced to do the right thing at the point of a gun, and the government of Canada in 1870 was no exception, especially when one of the principal demands of those negotiating on behalf of the "rebels" was a general amnesty for all illegal acts committed by any parties involved in the disturbances in Red River. Two points are worth making here. One is that the uproar in Ontario over the death of Thomas Scott occurred in the midst of the negotiations, making a general amnesty doubly difficult for the Canadian government to swallow. The second is that the delegates of the provisional government headed by Riel were dealing not with representatives of the British Empire accustomed to making such arrangements in distant parts of the Empire and not directly responsible to the population of the territories involved, but with a Canadian government both delicately placed politically in attempting to balance a variety of political constituencies and agreeing to include Red River as a full-fledged province of the relatively new Dominion. These last considerations were particularly important for Riel, since it was likely — indeed almost certain — that he would become a major political figure in Manitoba, either as one of its representatives to the Canadian House of Commons or, after the achievement of full responsible government, as its premier. Riel's behaviour — and his correspondence in his papers — over the next few years suggest that such political leadership was exactly what he had in mind for himself, and with an amnesty would have achieved. When Riel wrote in 1884, probably to W. H. Jackson, that "Mr Norquay is playing a glorious part, at the head of the manitoba responsible government," referring to the Manitoba premier's efforts to extract better terms for his province from Ottawa, one suspects not only that Riel identified with Norquay's cause but with his position.

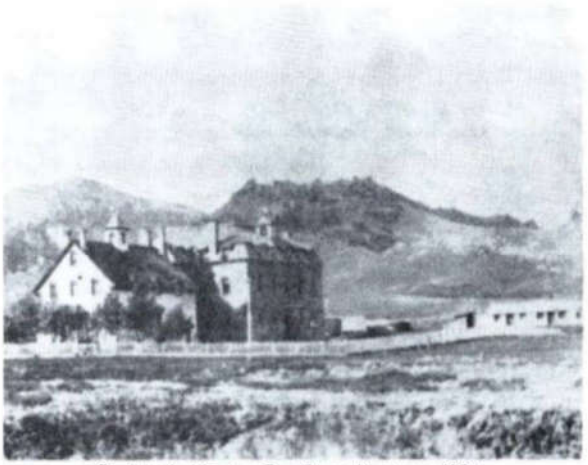
Without the promised amnesty, never guaranteed in writing by the Canadians because of its political sensitivity, Riel was reduced to exercising political influence from afar, pressing continually but ineffectually for the execution of the guarantees given his delegates, and ultimately to direct confrontation with Ottawa by getting himself elected to the Canadian House of Commons. No one more than Riel appreciated the farcical aspects of his appearance in the House in 1874, and in one of his rare flashes of conscious humour Riel told a reporter in 1883 that he had not hidden out in the legislative building on the day of the opening of Parliament, but stood "about in the lobbies like any other member and I did not make any effort to keep out of the way. I just acted in an ordinary manner." But while standing aimlessly around in lobbies obviously called no attention to himself, signing the roll and attempting to take his seat did. Like those rebellious men before him who had attempted such a ploy — one thinks of John Wilkes a century earlier — he was rapidly expelled from the Commons for infringement of its privileges. The one ultimate advantage gained from his action was on the question of his status; a year later he was granted amnesty "conditional on five years' banishment from Her Majesty's Dominions."

Instead of resolving his situation, banishment appears to have been more than Riel could handle. It is in dealing with these matters that the full publication of Riel's correspondence is so useful. By 1875 Riel had

been on the run for nearly five years, living mainly in the homes of friends and friendly priests in the United States and occasionally venturing back into Manitoba, obviously with some trepidation. By 1874 he had left Minnesota and moved further east to northern New York, where he was closer to Ottawa. The papers suggest no gainful employment. He was of course always hoping that the amnesty would be proclaimed and he could take his proper place among his people and his province. Some money came from sales of land, but mainly support came from Bishop Taché, perhaps laundering a government payout to keep him away, and from the charity of friends. Finances were plainly not a happy business for a proud Riel in the early 1870s, as his correspondence demonstrates. Five years as a wandering (and stateless) mendicant, unable to do much productive work and isolated from his family, friends, and people, would be difficult for anyone to survive without some considerable strain.

Riel might have reacted to his new five year banishment in a variety of ways, although it must be added that an additional five years of exile was a cruel blow, too long a period to meet with equanimity, too short a time to decide to put paid to his hopes of a normal life in his own country. Banishment for life would probably have been easier to accept. In any event, Riel might have done what thousands of other exiles before and since have done, by finding somewhere to settle in for the duration and making the best of it, perhaps among congenial fellow refugees. The United States certainly had a number of communities of political refugees in its larger eastern cities to which he might have attached himself. Alternatively, Riel might have decided to break with his past, and again like thousands of exiles before and since, to start a new life in the United States. Riel, of course, chose neither of these options in 1875. Instead he fell apart emotionally and suffered what amounted to a nervous breakdown, a reaction further complicated by his spiritual state. We can understand and appreciate his emotional collapse, given the strain under which he had been operating for years, but we must also keep in mind that the collapse was accompanied by religious visions and revelations that move it out of the realm of simple insanity.

The spiritual nature of Riel's mental and emotional state after 1875 introduces a sort of wild card into the situation, making his behaviour particularly difficult to interpret and properly appreciate. The Judeo-Christian tradition has a long history of acceptance of supranatural human experience. Visions, visitations, and revelations, as well as other occurrences such as the appearance of stigmata, have been recognized for nearly 2,000 years by the Roman Catholic Church as potentially legitimate, although the Church has developed elaborate criteria for judging such matters. But



St. Peter's Mission, Sun River, Montana, 1884.

Roman Catholicism has had no monopoly on extraordinary spiritual experience, and within North America, Protestantism has produced a long series of messianic and prophetic figures whose religious state is no more unrational than that of Louis Riel. Indeed, Riel's prophetic messianism probably makes more sense seen in the context of nineteenth-century American Protestant millenialism than Catholic supranaturalism, and comparisons with spiritual leaders like Joseph Smith and Brigham Young are hardly farfetched. Unlike the Mormons, who were able to establish themselves in a new promised land in advance of civil authority, Riel and the Métis of the Canadian Northwest had to deal with the Canadian government backed by armies and the paramilitary forces of the Mounted Police. Finally, there is some tradition of the supranatural even in the secular system and even in Canada. A Canadian prime minister only half a century after Riel's death had dream visions and conversed with the spirit world, and, we are told, such experiences did not greatly affect his ability to govern Canada on a pragmatic political basis. Both because of the historical context and because of our own greater appreciation of the complexities of abnormal behaviour (and its constantly shifting definition by society), we are perhaps more likely to shy away from simple attributions of insanity to people like Louis Riel.

Nevertheless, Riel was institutionalized in several mental hospitals of his day between 1876 and 1878, less because of his spiritual experiences than because of his observed behaviour, which made it difficult for him to lead anything resembling an outwardly normal life. This edition of the papers is never strong on context, a point to which I shall return, and the casual reader of Riel's writings during these years might not fully appreciate the extreme nature of his condition. "Alienists" and medical people of the time might be

Man on horseback: Louis Riel 1885

unreliable witnesses as to the nature of his problem, but there is no reason to doubt their recorded observations of his mental and emotional complete withdrawal from the world around him. His mental state makes it difficult to interpret the documents written in periods surrounding his institutionalization. What are we to make, for example, of the memoir to American president Ulysses S. Grant, dated by the editors as written late in 1875 (and probably never communicated)? Here Riel outlines the grievances of the Métis against the Canadian government accumulated since 1870, arguing "Undoubtedly it is m[os]t just that we should, in consequence, reassume our former attitude." (II, p. 8). While the presentation of grievances is quite lucid and credible, his calculations of his potential support and opposition ("In all, I have, in manitoba and northwest, about 68,000 souls to support my policy. The Canadian government have not more than 10,000 souls, to resist my forces.") are less than compelling. In 1875, Riel anticipated total armed backing from the English and French Métis, three to four thousand "of adventurers who are against Canada to a man," and the "favourable dispositions" of 38,000 Indians. He discounted 3,000 of the pro-Canadians as Mennonites who would not fight, and as for the Mounted Police, they "can hardly take care of their horses." Moreover, he expected hundreds of French-Canadians and Irishmen to flock to his standard as new emigrants to Manitoba. Were these the calculations of an impotent rebel exile indulging his fantasies, or the ravings of a man demented? In any event, if this sort of thinking coloured his decision to return to the Canadian North West in 1884, he joins other armed rebels in Canadian history (William Lyon Mackenzie and L. J. Papineau, for example) in totally overoptimistic expectations about the strength of his employable forces.

After his emergence from institutionalization early in 1878, Riel returned to upstate New York and made his way back west to Montana in 1879. Once again, the complete run of documentation for his years in Montana is extremely useful in illuminating one of the least well-known aspects of his life. It would appear that Riel had finally decided to come to terms with exile and to make a new life for himself in the United States. In Montana he made himself useful to the authorities as an intermediary with both the Indians and the Métis, supporting the Republicans rather than the Democrats, a reminder that in this period the modern stereotypes of the American parties are quite irrelevant. The Republicans tended to be the liberals and radicals, and the Democrats the backroom boys committed to the status quo. After several early abortive attempts at courtship, one in Montreal in the 1860s and one during his first period of exile, Riel married in 1881, initially *à la façon du pays* but later in a religious ceremony. His wife, Marguerite Monet, was a Red River Métis, ill-educated and (unlike the previous candidates) not of a prominent and upwardly-mobile French-Canadian family. He obtained steady employment as a schoolmaster at St. Peter's Mission, became a father, and applied successfully for American citizenship. What could be more conventional?

Even a careful reader sensitized with hindsight would have trouble in finding in Riel's Montana papers evidence of instability (mental or otherwise), religious mania, or even discontent. He continued to be interested in his "people", the Métis or "Halfbreeds", as he himself referred to the mixed bloods of Dakota and Montana. His writing about the American Halfbreed Question was judicious and balanced, mainly in English, a language Riel used for business but not for passionate matters. There is a sense of distance between Riel the observer/commentator and his subject, whether liquor for halfbreeds (a Montana newspaper described his views as "An Intelligent Statement of the Case by Louis Riel") or the American refusal to permit the immigration of Asiatics. There is quiet humour; the newspaper interview noted earlier is from

this period, as is Riel's English wordplay (he refers to "the United Moral States" in connection with Asiatic immigration, observing "... because the States are Moral, as I say; and because the Mongols have no moral state enough to present the States, they are unwilling, they hesitate." (II, p. 370). Nothing in the Montana documents of volume II prepares the reader for the opening documents of volume III, dealing with Riel's response to the invitation of a delegation of North West inhabitants to come and advise them in their disputes with the Canadian government. Three drafts precede the final letter of acceptance, the first neutral, the second dubious, the third positive but hedged with qualifications. This material represents our only hint as to the thought process by which Riel became involved in the events that would lead to his execution.

There exists a curious tendency when dealing with Riel to look for parallels and comparisons. His arch-opponent, Sir John A. Macdonald, compared him in 1885 with the Mahdi, the Muslim messianic prophet who was leading his people against the British government in the Sudan and who was held responsible for the death of General Gordon at Khartoum early in the same year as the North West Uprising led by Louis Riel. The Prime Minister of Canada obviously sought to associate Riel and his rebellion with the series of events in northern Africa that had the British Empire in an uproar, but the comparison was not entirely fanciful or ridiculous. The implicit parallel between Duck Lake and Khartoum may have been useful politically, but the event most closely resembling Duck Lake, where armed Métis confronted a party of North-West Mounted Police and settlers with disastrous results for the Mounties, is Seven Oaks, where in 1816 a party of settlers led by Red River governor Robert Semple was decimated by the Métis. In both cases the ensuing carnage of the encounters was accidental and responsibility for invoking violence impossible to assess. The difference between Seven Oaks and Duck Lake, of course, was that the Red River settlers of 1816 could not invoke external reinforcement, since Semple's authority came from the Hudson's Bay Company and for complex reasons was not supported by the imperial authorities, while the Canadian government found both the will and the means to bring military forces into play that were beyond the capabilities of the Métis to resist. Nevertheless, Duck Lake was a critical turning point for Riel, who had been advocating a peaceable demonstration of discontent rather than a war. Once the territory burst into armed conflict, the road to the gallows was almost inexorable.

Assessing the importance of this publication of Riel's papers is no easy matter. The edition is a scholarly one rather than one designed to be "user-friendly" for the proverbial general reader. A relative lack of narrative coherence to the material is not, in my judgment, much

A Riel Ugly Position

This Bengough cartoon appeared in Grip as Riel awaited execution.

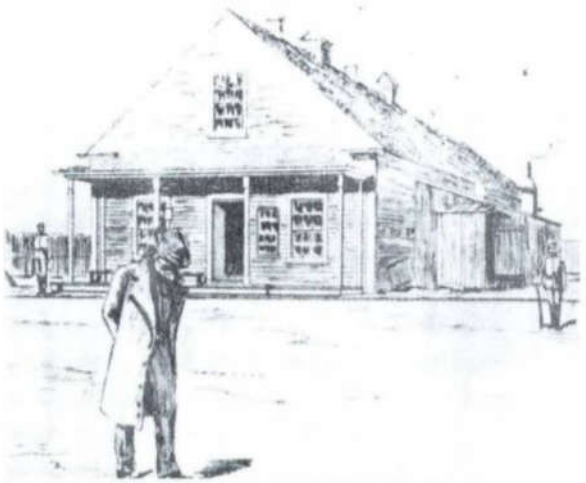
helped by the scholarly apparatus, however thorough and skillful within its own limitations. Individual volumes are not indexed, and there is no subject index in the reference volume, although a full index to names appearing in the texts and notes is included there, along with biographical information about the major players. The decision of the editorial team to relegate much of the scholarly apparatus to a separate volume is understandable, although such items as the detailed chronology of events in Riel's life (and beyond it) might well have appeared at the beginning of the appropriate volume of text. As matters stand, the reader is constantly required to juggle two physical volumes to take full advantage of the detailed apparatus provided by the editors. Introductory material for the textual volumes is kept relatively brief, a reasonable strategy if the documents themselves and the notes for them pro-

vide coherence. Unfortunately, the texts are not self-narrating, and a good deal of context is often necessary to make much sense of them. A reader not thoroughly conversant with the period and the secondary literature is probably in some trouble with these volumes. It is possible to combine both scholarly apparatus and user convenience, as Dan Lawrence's wonderful edition of the letters of George Bernard Shaw well demonstrates. In the case of Riel, scholarly considerations appear to have predominated over attempting to appeal to an audience actually prepared to read the texts.

In a similar vein, while the decision to publish the documents and the accompanying endnotes in the language of their original creation is certainly intellectually and even politically justifiable, a considerable gap does exist between the official Canadian language policy and the realities of everyday life. Louis Riel wrote mainly in French, and the absence of translations means, one suspects, that the effective audience for his papers, particularly in Western Canada, is both small and converted already. This edition is not likely to convey to the anglophone public, among which many if not most of his critics are to be found, the rich complexities and accomplishments of a fascinating figure in Western Canadian history.

In terms of the scholarly importance of the Riel papers, their impact, while it will be considerable, has been blunted in several ways. In the first place, the editors of these volumes have scooped themselves already, by publishing separate collections of documents and monographs that publicize many of the main revelations that might have come from the complete edition. There are still themes and implications to be teased from the material, but at least in academic circles, Riel's prophetic messianism and his literary pretensions are aspects of his life that are now well known. In the second place, the scholarly debate over Riel, aided in part by the separate work of some of the editors of these volumes, has in a sense moved beyond these documents. A proper understanding of Riel and his place in Canadian history now seems to depend on thorough investigations of contexts hardly touched by Riel's own writing: the policies of the Canadian government toward the Métis and the West, the ways in which Riel and his movements were employed in Eastern Canada for other purposes, and the complex questions of native and Métis land claims. Nevertheless, the publication of the Riel papers is a significant achievement for Canadian scholarship, and the project has made important contributions to the debate over Riel and his place in Canadian history. For all this the editors deserve a hearty "well done". ◆

J. M. Bumsted is Professor of History at St. John's College, University of Manitoba.



Riel in front of the NWMP barracks, Regina. From the Canadian Illustrated News, 1885.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING: The following brief list of books may be of some assistance to readers in providing a context for the Riel papers:

G. F. G. Stanley, The Birth of Western Canada: A History of the Riel Rebellions (Toronto, 1960).

G. F. G. Stanley, Louis Riel (Toronto, 1963).

Arthur Silver, The French-Canadian Idea of Confederation, 1864-1900 (Toronto, 1982).

Thomas Flanagan, Louis 'David' Riel: 'Prophet of the New World' (Toronto, 1979).

Thomas Flanagan, Riel and the Rebellion: 1885 Reconsidered (Saskatoon, 1983).

Gilles Martel, Glen Campbell, and Thomas Flanagan, eds., Louis Riel: Poésies de Jeunesse (St. Boniface, 1977).

Thomas Flanagan, ed., The Diaries of Louis Riel (Edmonton, 1976).

Gilles Martel, Le Messianisme de Louis Riel (Waterloo, 1984).

Douglas Sprague and Ronald Frye, The Genealogy of the First Métis Nation (Winnipeg, 1984).

W. L. Morton, ed., Alexander Begg's Red River Journal and Other Papers Relative to the Red River Resistance of 1869-1870 (Toronto, 1956).

W. L. Morton, Manitoba: The Birth of a Province (Altona, 1965).

Caesars of the Wilderness

The second volume of Peter C. Newman's controversial history of the Hudson's Bay Company will be published this autumn. *Caesars of the Wilderness* is expected to cause as great a stir as the first volume in the series, *Company of Adventurers.* An excerpt from *Caesars of the Wilderness* will be published in the October/November issue of *The Beaver* now being prepared for publication.

The October/November issue will also contain Anne Morton's moving account of the last days of a young Canadian soldier in the "war to end all wars", *One Life, One Death.*

Explore Canada's history in these and other fascinating articles in the October/November issue of *The Beaver.*

Breaking the Soil

By Keith Ralston

FARMING THE FRONTIER

The Agricultural Opening of the Oregon Country, 1786-1846
By James R. Gibson. University of British Columbia Press, Vancouver, 1985. 265 pp., illus. $29.95.

The same mail that brought James R. Gibson's book for review also included a copy of that great popular educator, the *National Geographic*, with a historical map of the U.S. Pacific Northwest, the very "Oregon country" studied in *Farming the Frontier*. The map, one in a series called "The making of America", confidently asserts that the years circa 1800-1850 were the years of "Fur Trade Rivalries". Only in the next period of "Conquest — Colonization" from 1850 to 1880 did, it says, agriculture develop.

The juxtaposition of the map as a popularizer of historical knowledge, and the research monograph, neatly illustrates the role of the historical researcher, since no such map can in future ignore Professor Gibson's placing of the beginning of northwest agriculture in the period before, not after, 1850. Gibson's painstaking and detailed exposition of the beginnings and growth of grain, livestock, vegetable and fruit production is conclusive, and will in due course alter the popular historical perceptions of the euro-american penetration of the Oregon country.

In spite of the time limits set in the title, this volume really begins with HBC Governor George Simpson's plan in the 1820s to make the Company's operations west of the Rockies more profitable by reducing the volume of costly food imports. The first part of the book therefore describes the trials and tribulations of agriculture at the network of Company posts throughout the Oregon country, jointly occupied by British and Americans under the convention of 1818. Gibson's verdict, supported by a wealth of fascinating detail, is that Simpson's objective was completely achieved. Although obviously not every post became independent, sufficient food was produced and transported throughout the Columbia district both to eliminate the import of staples and to relieve the monotony of the diet, even in the ill-favoured climate of New Caledonia to the north. There was, in addition, a surplus of produce for export sufficient that the HBC could shut out

Sir George Simpson.

Hudson's Bay Company

American traders from the Northwest Coast by supplanting them as food suppliers to Russian America.

His verdict on the next stage of the Company's strategy, the creation of the Puget Sound Agricultural Company, is not nearly so favourable. In Gibson's judgment, the failure stemmed from the inability to recruit and hold settlers under the terms of land tenure offered by the PSA. Tenant farming couldn't compete with the lure of free land south of the Columbia on the Williamette River. "It was not farming and fur trading *per se* that clashed; rather, it was the freehold farm and the Company's monopoly" (p. 189). The Willamette valley was the most successful farming area in the region, perhaps not surprisingly in view of its favourable climate, but also because of the chance it offered to become independent of Company rule.

Gibson also devotes chapters to both missionary farming and native Indian agriculture. He argues that the needs of agriculture and the demands of conversion operated in opposition to one another — the Methodists, the most successful farmers, had the fewest native converts and the itinerant Jesuits the most. Attempts to transform wandering bands of natives into sedentary agriculturalists were uniformly a failure, Gibson observing that the rejection of agriculture was also a rejection of euro-american values.

In Professor Gibson's view, the future transcontinental Canada 'wuz robbed'

An epilogue describes the division of old Oregon into British and American territories by the extension to the sea of the line along 49° N, the boundary already existing east of the Rocky Mountains. Here the objective scholar gives way to the ardent nationalist. In Professor Gibson's view, the future transcontinental Canada "wuz robbed", through a combination of HBC indifference, British wavering and United States firmness. One scarcely knows what to make of the passionate tone, except to speculate that the limits to the horizons of a Fraser Valley boyhood, cut off to the south by the ever-present boundary, still lurk as a felt grievance in the sober-sided researcher.

Keith Ralston teaches history at the University of British Columbia.

THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY AND THE FUR TRADE 1670-1870

By GLYNDWR WILLIAMS

86 pages. Illustrated

The reprint edition of the Autumn 1983 issue of *The Beaver* is now available at the following prices:

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Canada's Capital Then and Now

By Michael P.J. Kennedy

OTTAWA
An Illustrated History

By John H. Taylor. James Lorimer Company and Canadian Museum of Civilization, Toronto, 1986. 232 pp., illus. $27.95.

Canadians' fascination with the history of the capital and their appreciation for the pictorial beauty of its urban landscape, have generated numerous volumes which purport to show the real Ottawa.

For the scholarly, there have been several historical books, most notably *The Queen's Choice* by Wilfred Eggleston (1961), which have provided historical accounts of the community that evolved from a small lumber town to become Canada's national seat of government.

For the coffee table set, there have been a plethora of what might best be termed "picture books" which reveal the colour and beauty of the Parliament Buildings, the Mile of History along Sussex Drive, and include the ubiquitous photographs depicting thousands of ice skaters availing themselves of the world's longest skating rink on the Rideau Canal. There have, of course, always been the souvenir tourist booklets which have provided cursory sketches of Canada's capital; its geography, history, and political origins. These generally have numerous photographs of the contemporary capital with little historical or sociological text.

Not until this well-researched volume by John H. Taylor has anyone so effectively combined the portrayal of the photogenic capital with competent historical presentation. This easy-to-read yet scholarly approach to a municipality's history goes far beyond the physical description of the cityscape with its trees, parkways, museums, and malls. The author portrays in colourful detail the evolution of a community. Assisted by period maps and photographs, the text reveals the constantly changing demographics, neighbourhood rivalries, and economic transformation experienced by a growing community over a period of more than 150 years.

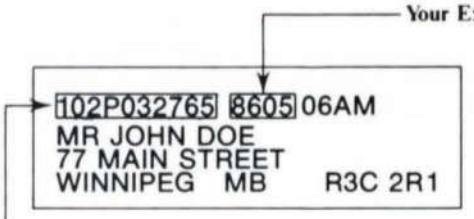
This is a city which has always struggled to have control of its own destiny. As it developed from lumber town to canal construction site to government administration centre it remained a community with local political rivalries, emerging demands for transportation and civic services. Yet throughout its history as a community it has had an almost constant conflict between its citizens and those denizens of government service who attempt to shape and control the community with little regard for the aspirations of the permanent citizenry.

The dynamics of the interaction between the various governing groups in Ottawa's history and those who have sought to live and work within its borders are well captured in this volume. It is, at once, educational and entertaining reading.

In effect, *Ottawa: An Illustrated History* is the story of the people whose political, social, cultural, and commercial interaction dictated the metamorphosis of a small settlement as it developed into a very special city.

Michael P.J. Kennedy teaches communication arts and Canadian literature at Kelsey Institute of Applied Arts and Sciences in Saskatoon.

How to read your Mailing Label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A Capital Scrapbook

From *Ottawa: An Illustrated History*

The By Ward Market, circa 1900.

Celebration in front of the old Centre Block, 24 May 1867.

This is said to be Wellington Street in the late 1850s or 1860s.

An early national arts centre, the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts building, Ottawa 1880.

The Beaver Has Moved

Having resided on Main Street near the site of Upper Fort Garry since 1920, *The Beaver* recently moved to new quarters.

The magazine's offices are now located in the Hudson's Bay Company's retail store in downtown Winnipeg. All correspondence should be addressed to:

The Beaver,
450 Portage Avenue,
Winnipeg, Manitoba,
R3C 0E7
Telephone: (204) 786-7048

If you have written to our old address, do not worry, your letter will reach us.

Animals at Home

By Laird Rankin

MAMMALS IN NORTH AMERICA
By Dr. Robert E. Wrigley. Hyperion Press, Winnipeg, 1986. 360 pp., illus. $49.95.

This is the book that Dr. Robert Wrigley always wanted as a child. It was not the case of being unable to afford such a book; the fact was, no such book existed. Recalls Wrigley, who is now museum director, Manitoba Museum of Man and Nature in Winnipeg: ". . . I never came across that special source of information I was searching for as a youngster — a book that entered the daily lives of animals, large and small; one that described facts about the wonderful creatures that most people don't even know exist in their country".

While there are many fine books in print about mammals, the concept of *Mammals in North America* sets it apart from the others. It is a thick storybook, picture book and reference source between a pair of sturdy hard covers. For each of the 115 species in the book, who inhabit that vast area between the Arctic Ocean and the tropical rain forest, Wrigley has written a wildlife adventure story and provided authoritative, detailed technical reference material. There are biome and distribution maps, a checklist of North American mammals and a substantial section of additional reading material.

Wrigley writes in a clear, straightforward manner. His readable writing reflects a considerable knowledge and love of the subjects. His stories also bring the animals to life. In the tale about the polar bear, for instance, we follow this hungry "King of the Arctic" from Baffin Island to Labrador — a 956 mile odyssey — in search of seal.

Wrigley's stories certainly flesh out the fur — so to speak — rather than leaving it lifeless or stretched on the page. Dwayne Harty's paintings are not so successful. It is debatable whether or not his work constitutes good wildlife art. It is possible that their lack of lustre and richness could have been improved with a different paper stock. Nevertheless, the paintings are functional. They do set out the mammals in their respective natural habitats and complement Wrigley's stories.

Despite some reservations on the quality of the illustrations, Hyperion Press of Winnipeg has put much care into this animal book. This small publishing house has distinguished itself through books of consistently high quality. *Mammals in North America* ranks with the best of their books.

Laird Rankin is a Winnipeg freelance writer.

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At a glance, you can see what occurred simultaneously in: the Nation; Atlantic Canada; Central Canada; Western Canada; the North; and the World, in a way that text books simply can't communicate. For instance, did you know that the first wave of Scottish settlers arrived in Nova Scotia just prior to the upheaval of the American Revolution? Or that Champlain established Quebec fully 12 years before the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock?

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THE PACKET

Letters to and from The Editor

Bringing History to the Airwaves

Iris Allan, an Edmonton writer who turned periods of Canada's history into highly-readable adventure stories, has died in Edmonton at the age of 77.

Mrs. Allan's best-selling book, *John Rowand, Fur Trader,* chronicled the early years of the first Chief Factor of the Hudson's Bay Company trading post at Fort Edmonton. Her other books on historical topics included the boyhood tales of Reverend John McDougall *The Boy in Buckskins,* how Major Walsh of the Mounties dealt humanely with Sitting Bull and his warriors in *White Sioux,* and the life and battles of famous bush pilot and war-time air ace *Wop May.*

Thousands of school students throughout Western Canada heard her tales of the early days of fur traders, Indians and the North West Mounted Police in the many School

Iris Allan.

Broadcast scripts produced over many years. Some of these are still being circulated on cassettes (and in some cases video cassettes) today.

Uncounted articles on subjects from history to modern restaurant operation carried Iris Allan's byline into many magazines, including *The Beaver.*

Unlike the popular conception of the riches that come to a much-published author, Mrs. Allan often quipped that one prime requisite for a woman who wants to write is a "husband with a good regular job."

She did receive her share of honours, however. In 1967, she won the John S. Ewart Award from the University of Manitoba, which financed a trip to do research in the National Archives in Ottawa. In 1979, she won an Alberta Achievement Award.

Mrs. Allan was predeceased by her husband R. Fred Allan, and is survived by one son and two granddaughters.

Indians

Permit me to congratulate you and your responsible staff for the high calibre of your February/March 1987 issue. The thorough examination of the native Indian population in Canada has been long overdue and, in my opinion, *The Beaver* has risen successfully to the task and challenge.

Having been born and raised in Calgary and the West I have had more than a casual exposure to the Indian problem. I join with you in hoping that the necessary government action at all levels will be undertaken with a sense of urgency. Thank you.

Maxwell P. Martyn
Air Marshall, RCAF (ret'd),
Kingston, Ontario.

A MESSAGE TO OUR READERS

From time to time *The Beaver* exchanges its mailing list with other publications. As a subscriber to *The Beaver* you may request that your name be excluded from such exchanges by writing to *The Beaver*, Circulation Department, 77 Main Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada R3C 2R1.

More Maps

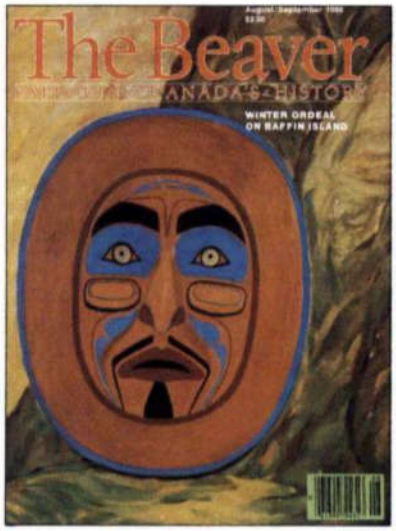
What a delight to read Toni Onley's journal describing his voyage to our north. *(The Beaver,* April/May 1987). As promised in the box on page 10, his prose was "as iridescent as his painting."

In order to help me follow his travels during that summer trip, I had my Canadian atlas by my side. Indeed, I usually keep maps handy whenever I read *The Beaver.* This helps me to 'visualize' the places mentioned in the articles. Unfortunately, many of the places which Onley describes in his diary did not appear on my maps.

Permit me to suggest that future articles in *The Beaver* be accompanied by maps showing the locations mentioned in the article. This would increase the pleasure and enjoyment of myself, and other readers who are cartophiles. (Is there such a word as "cartophile"?)

Marvin Kay, MD.,
Toronto.

Why a magazine is not like any other product... and why that matters to you



Consider the magazine you are now holding. At one level, it is a product: ink applied to paper. Yet the reasons for which you value this magazine have nothing to do with either ink or paper. You're reading these pages for the images, the messages, the ideas.

It is particularly important to you because, like you, it's Canadian.

Why we need our magazines

- They're produced (written, edited, photographed, illustrated) by Canadians, and thus carry information about us and present our point of view.
- They reflect what we are interested in, preserving and encouraging our own unique values, the way we look at ourselves, the way we look at the world.
- They help us create the stars, the legends we need. Canadian magazines foster our own sense of ourselves.
- They present the best of the literature, prose and poetry that we produce.
- They express the regional differences that distinguish us from one another, and the national pride and purpose that link us together.
- They tie us together with a ribbon of print, and help us define who we are.
- They give us a vital voice of our own.

We've got our own excellence

A Canadian magazine is something special. It adds a journalistic dimension that no other medium can provide—depth and wholeness and texture, plus the visual impact of graphic design. Because a magazine is free from daily deadlines, it can achieve a level of thoroughness and excellence that is seldom attainable in other media.

How the governments of Canada helped

To assure Canadians the information a free and independent people need (given our small, spread-out population and powerful foreign competition), successive governments over the past century have gradually built a structure of postal, tariff and tax-related incentives and supportive measures.

And they have worked! Today Canada has a healthier magazine industry than ever before, with some 5,000 periodicals for people of every interest and location.

But it's a fragile industry: At last count more than half of Canada's periodicals had circulations of fewer than 2,000 copies per issue, and only 110 periodicals had circulations of 100,000 or more per issue. Foreign publications still account for 77% of all English-language newsstand sales.

The threat to your magazine

The Government in Ottawa is now threatening to treat Canada's magazines as if they were so many widgets. It's threatening to eliminate the postal, tariff and tax-related incentives and supportive measures...to dismantle the very structure that past governments have worked so hard to build and maintain.

The Government in Ottawa is threatening the survival of the majority of Canada's magazines and considering measures that will significantly raise the cost to readers of those that survive.

Canada's magazines tell us about ourselves. They're a voice of our own. If the current Government in Ottawa were to treat Canada's magazines as if they were just another product, it would diminish (or even silence) that voice forever.

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